Planet Ladder
4
TOKYOPOP
Yuri Narushima

Planet Ladder

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Planet Ladder

Volume 4

Written and Illustrated by
Yuri Narushima

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Los Angeles . Tokyo

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Translator - Nan Rymer
English Adaption - Kristen Bailey Murphy
Associate Editor - Jodi Bryson
Retouch and Lettering - Yoffy
Cover Layout and Graphic Designer - Anna Kernbaum

Senior Editor - Julie Taylor
Production Managers - Jennifer Miller and Jennifer Wagner
Art Director - Matthew Alford
VP of Production & Manufacturing - Ron Klamert
President & C.O.O. - John Parker
Publisher - Stuart Levy

Email: editor@TOKYOPOP.com
Come visit us online at www.TOKYOPOP.com

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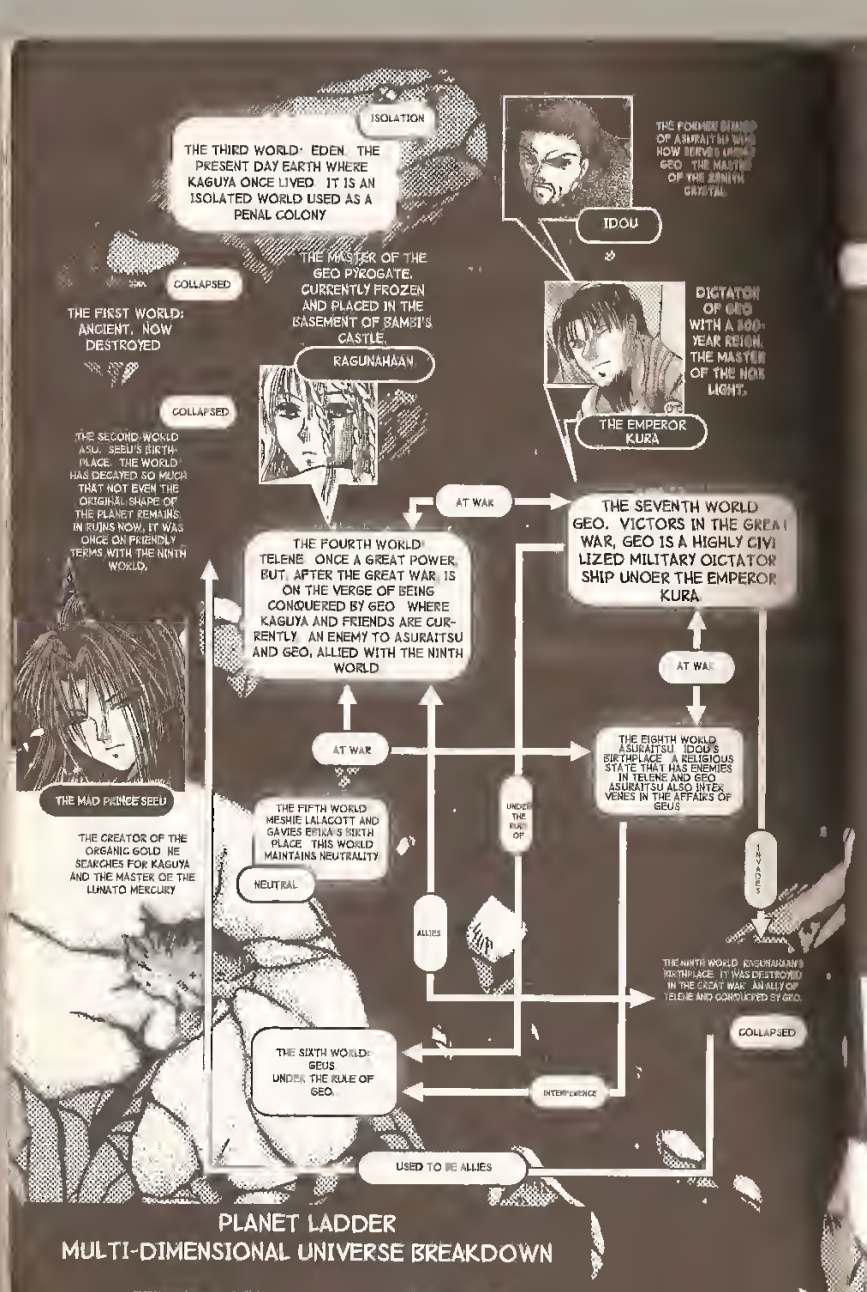

ISOLATION
THE THIRD WORLD: EDEN. THE PRESENT DAY EARTH WHERE KAGUYA ONCE LIVED. IT IS AN ISOLATED WORLD USED AS A PENAL COLONY
COLLAPSED
THE FIRST WORLD: ANCIENT, NOW DESTROYED
THE FORMER BEHOLD OF ASURAITSU WHO NOW SERVES UNDER GEO. THE MASTER OF THE ZENITH CRYSTAL.
IDOU
THE MASTER OF THE GEO PYROGATE, CURRENTLY FROZEN AND PLACED IN THE BASEMENT OF BAMBI'S CASTLE.
RAGUNAHAAN
DICTATOR OF GEO WITH A 300-YEAR REIGN. THE MASTER OF THE HOH LIGHT.
THE EMPEROR KURA
COLLAPSED
THE SECOND WORLD: ASU. SEEU'S BIRTHPLACE. THE WORLD HAS DECAYED SO MUCH THAT NOT EVEN THE ORIGINAL SHAPE OF THE PLANET REMAINS. IN RUINS NOW, IT WAS ONCE ON FRIENDLY TERMS WITH THE NINTH WORLD.
AT WAR
THE SEVENTH WORLD: GEO. VICTORS IN THE GREAT WAR, GEO IS A HIGHLY CIVILIZED MILITARY DICTATORSHIP UNDER THE EMPEROR KURA.
THE FOURTH WORLD: TELENE. ONCE A GREAT POWER, BUT, AFTER THE GREAT WAR, IS ON THE VERGE OF BEING CONQUERED BY GEO. WHERE KAGUYA AND FRIENDS ARE CURRENTLY. AN ENEMY TO ASURAITSU AND GEO, ALLIED WITH THE NINTH WORLD.
AT WAR
AT WAR
THE EIGHTH WORLD: ASURAITSU. IDOU'S BIRTHPLACE. A RELIGIOUS STATE THAT HAS ENEMIES IN TELENE AND GEO. ASURAITSU ALSO INTERVENES IN THE AFFAIRS OF GEOS
THE MAD PRINCE SEEU
THE CREATOR OF THE ORGANIC GOLD. HE SEARCHES FOR KAGUYA AND THE MASTER OF THE LUNATO MERCURY
THE FIFTH WORLD: MESHIE LALAGOTT AND GAVIES ERIKA'S BIRTH PLACE. THIS WORLD MAINTAINS NEUTRALITY
NEUTRAL
UNDER THE RULE OF
INVADES
ALLIES
THE NINTH WORLD: RAGUNAHAAN'S BIRTHPLACE. IT WAS DESTROYED IN THE GREAT WAR. AN ALLY OF TELENE AND CONSIDERED BY GEO.
COLLAPSED
THE SIXTH WORLD: GEOS. UNDER THE RULE OF GEO.
INTERFERENCE
USED TO BE ALLIES
PLANET LADDER
MULTI-DIMENSIONAL UNIVERSE BREAKDOWN

キャラクター紹介 Character Introduction

A MYSTERIOUS AND BEAUTIFUL SILVER-HAIRED GIRL. SHE PROTECTED KAGUYA WHEN SHE WAS FIRST LOST, AND IS NOW KAGUYA'S TRAVELING COMPANION.

SHIINA MOL BAMVIVIRIE (BAMBI)

KAGAMI

THE FORMER MASTER OF THE ORGANIC GOLD. ALTHOUGH HIS WHEREABOUTS ARE CURRENTLY UNKNOWN, HIS RELATIONSHIP TO KAGUYA REMAINS A MYSTERY.

KAGUYA HARUYAMA

A YOUNG GIRL WITH BLACK HAIR AND BLUE EYES, WITH NO MEMORY OF HER PAST BEFORE THE AGE OF FOUR. SHE IS SAID TO BE THE "GIRL OF ANANAI," THE KEY TO THE FUTURE OF THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL UNIVERSES.

TAKEYOSHI WASEDA

A FORMER STUDENT OF TOKYO IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY WHO NOW LIVES ON AS A LIVING DOLL. HE KNEW THE MAD PRINCE WHEN HE WAS JUST A BOY.

GOLD

A MOVING DOLL THAT IS THE MIRROR IMAGE OF KAGAMI. GOLD IS THE CURRENT USER OF THE ORGANIC GOLD.

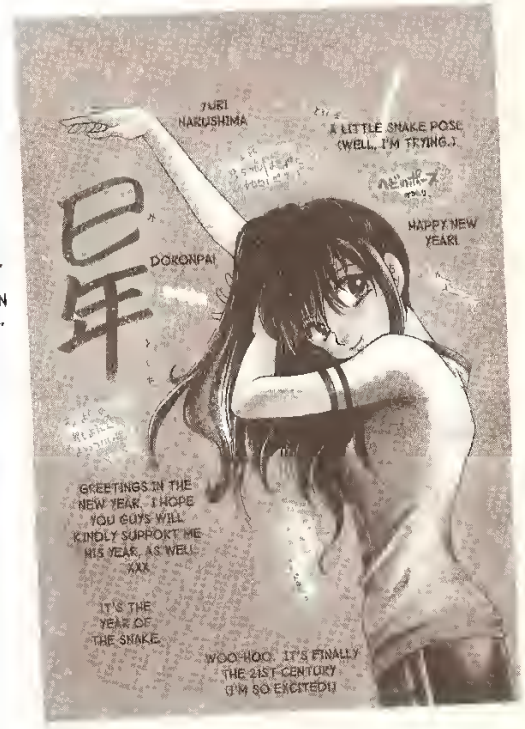
THE STORY UNTIL NOW...

AFTER STUMBLING INTO A FOREIGN WORLD, KAGUYA FINDS HER LIFE SAVED BY A BEAUTIFUL SILVER-HAIRED GIRL NAMED BAMBI. FROM BAMBI, KAGUYA LEARNS THAT SHE IS ON ANOTHER EARTH CALLED THE FOURTH WORLD, OR "TELENE," A WHOLLY SEPARATE WORLD FROM HER OWN "EARTH." SOUGHT BY MANY AS THE "GIRL OF ANANAI," KAGUYA, TOGETHER WITH BAMBI AND GOLD, SETS OUT ON A JOURNEY TO THE CITY WHERE THEY HOPE TO FIND THE COLLAPSER, A DEVICE THAT ENABLES FREE TRAVEL WITHIN THE UNIVERSES. DURING THEIR TRAVELS THROUGH THE WILDERNESS OF TELENE, KAGUYA MEETS UP WITH WASEDA, A SOUL THAT EXISTS IN THE BODY OF A GIANT ROOSTER. WASEDA REVEALS HIMSELF TO BE A JAPANESE NATIONAL WHO HAD COME TO THE SECOND WORLD, ASU, THROUGH A RIP IN THE DIMENSIONAL FABRIC OF THE UNIVERSE. ALONG WITH THIS REVELATION, WASEDA ALSO RELATES HIS MEMORIES OF SEEU'S CHILDHOOD, THE SECRETS SURROUNDING THE DEMISE OF THE SECOND WORLD, AND HOW HE HIMSELF CAME TO EXIST IN THE BODY OF A LIVING DOLL-A DOLL THAT WALKS AND TALKS AND POSESSES A HUMAN SOUL. HEARING WASEDA'S SAD BUT MOVING TALE, KAGUYA DECIDES TO USE HERSELF AS THE GREATEST LURE OF ALL SO THAT SHE MIGHT DIRECTLY FACE THE EMPEROR OF THE SEVENTH WORLD, GEO, AND GAIN THE CHANCE TO CHANGE THE INESCAPABLE AND RUINOUS FATE OF THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL UNIVERSE.

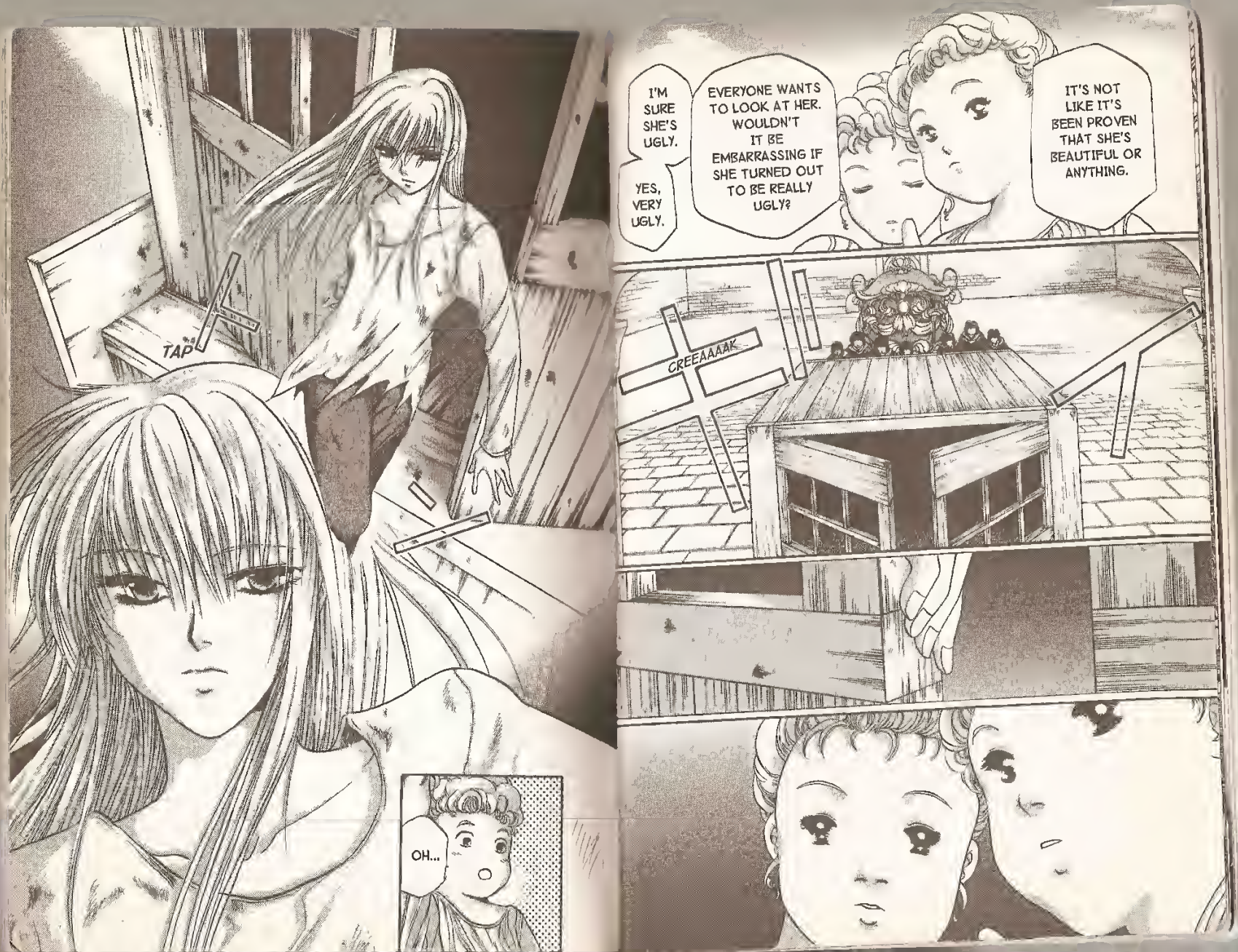
DID YOU HEAR ABOUT IT?
YEAH, I SURE DID.
SHE FINALLY GOT CAUGHT, RIGHT!? THAT GIRL CRIMINAL?
IDIOT..
SHE'S NOT A CRIMINAL.
SHE'S THE "PRINCESS OF CHOOSING"
...AND SHE'S COMING THROUGH TOWN TODAY.

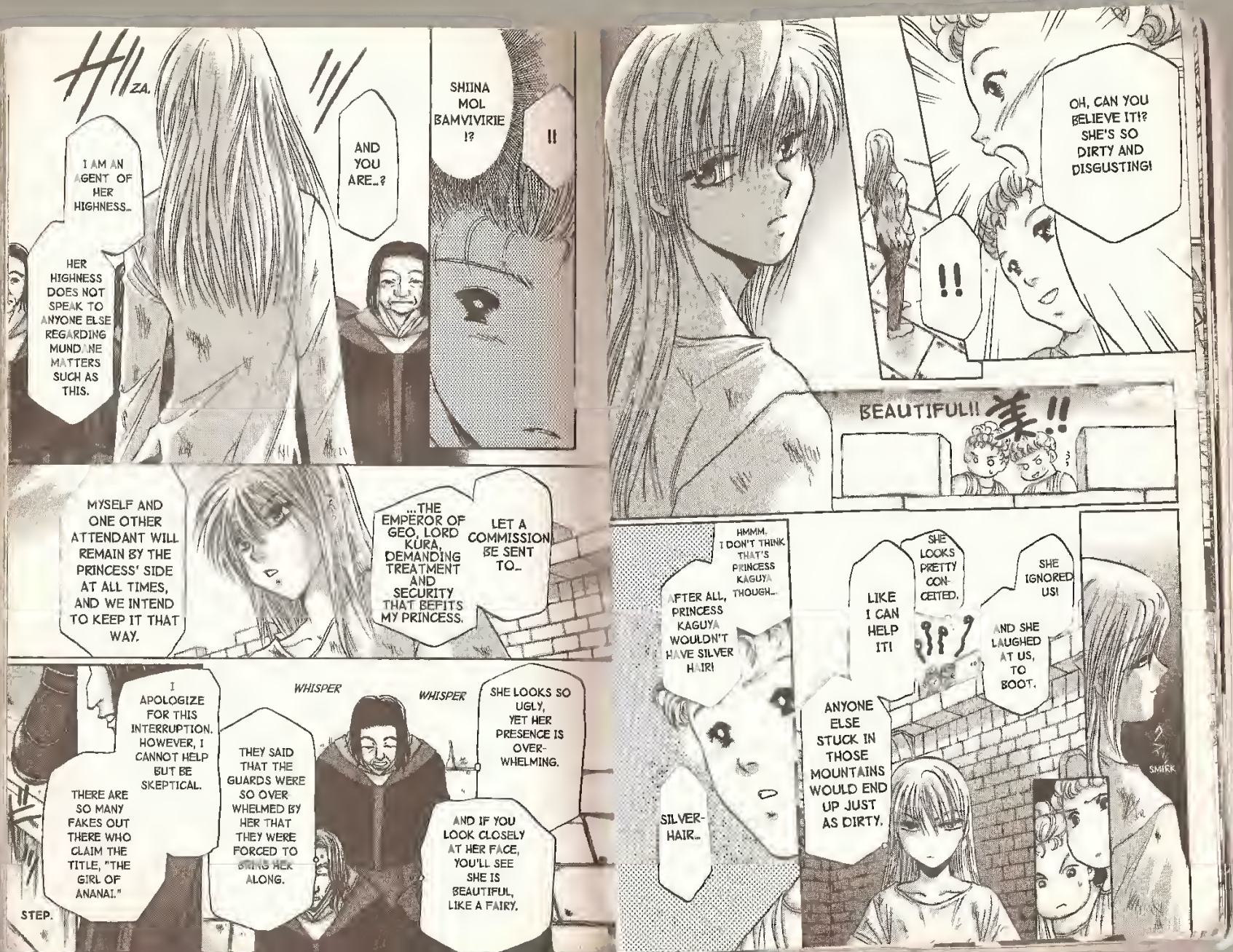
Thoughts on Y2K:

PLANET LADDER. I'M A PUZZLE, A PRINCESS, AND AN ANANAI, AS WELL.


YURI NARUSHIMA
A LITTLE SNAKE POSE (WELL, I'M TRYING.)
巳年
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
DOKONPA!
GREETINGS IN THE NEW YEAR. I HOPE YOU GUYS WILL KINDLY SUPPORT ME THIS YEAR, AS WELL. XXX
IT'S THE YEAR OF THE SNAKE.
WOO-HOO. IT'S FINALLY THE 21ST CENTURY. I'M SO EXCITED!!

CREEEEEAAAKKKACREEAAK
ガラ
PLEASE GET IN THIS CARRIAGE NOW.
WELCOME, PRINCESS KAGUYA.
LOOKS LIKE FATHER BROUGHT OUT HIS BEST CARRIAGE - ...FOR THIS OCCASION.
I WONDER WHAT KIND OF GIRL SHE IS, BIG SISTER!
I CAN'T SEE.
こそこそ SNEAK.
こそこそ SNEAK.
EWWW! HOW UTTERLY BOTHER-SOME
I KNOW THAT ALREADY!
BUT, BIG SISTER, I JUST HEARD FROM FATHER THAT HE WANTS US TO TAKE CARE OF THAT KAGUYA GIRL...
BIG SISTER, BIG SISTER!
OH, WHAT IS IT? DON'T BE SO VULGAR.
ガラガラガラ
CREEEEEAAAKKKACREEAAK
CREEEEEAAAKKKACREEAAK
IS THAT REALLY THEM?
I CAN'T SEE INSIDE.
HERE THEY COME.

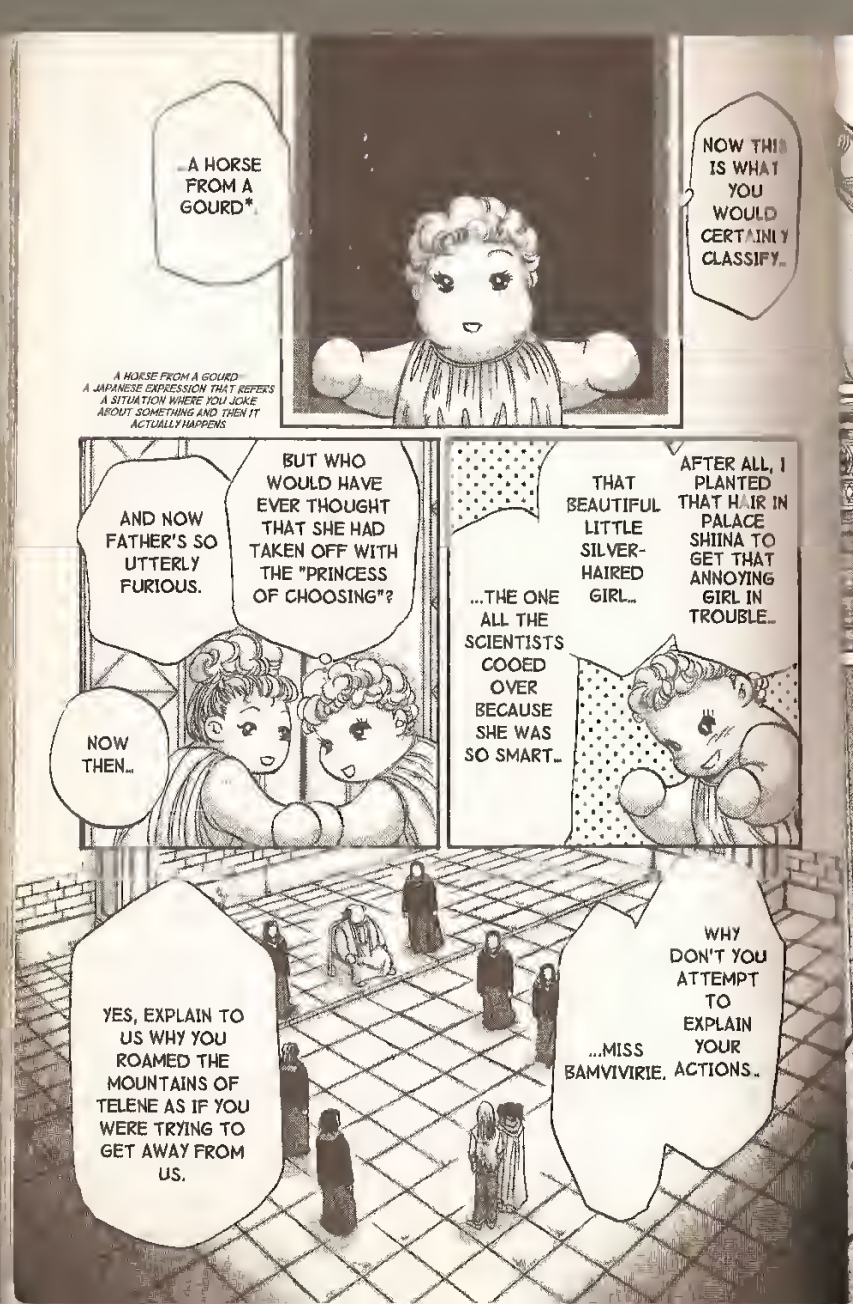

TAP
OH...
IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S BEEN PROVEN THAT SHE'S BEAUTIFUL OR ANYTHING.
EVERYONE WANTS TO LOOK AT HER. WOULDN'T IT BE EMBARRASSING IF SHE TURNED OUT TO BE REALLY UGLY?
I'M SURE SHE'S UGLY.
YES, VERY UGLY.
CREEAAAAK

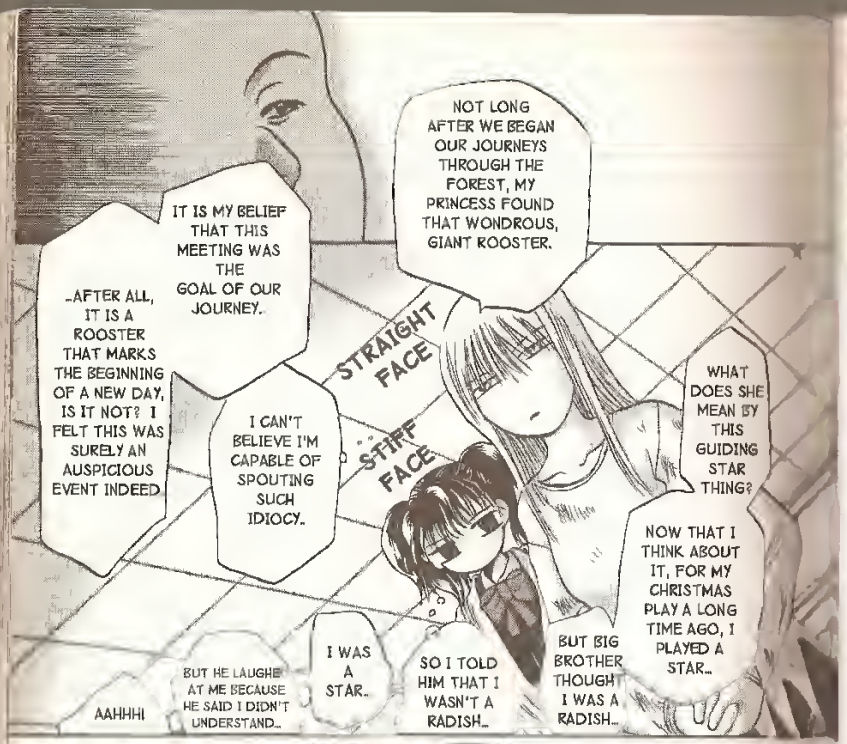

HIIZA.
SHIINA MOL BAMVIVIRIE I?
!!
AND YOU ARE..?
I AM AN AGENT OF HER HIGHNESS..
HER HIGHNESS DOES NOT SPEAK TO ANYONE ELSE REGARDING MUNDANE MATTERS SUCH AS THIS.
MYSELF AND ONE OTHER ATTENDANT WILL REMAIN BY THE PRINCESS' SIDE AT ALL TIMES, AND WE INTEND TO KEEP IT THAT WAY.
LET A COMMISSION BE SENT TO..
..THE EMPEROR OF GEO, LORD KURA, DEMANDING TREATMENT AND SECURITY THAT BEFITS MY PRINCESS.
I APOLOGIZE FOR THIS INTERRUPTION. HOWEVER, I CANNOT HELP BUT BE SKEPTICAL.
THERE ARE SO MANY FAKES OUT THERE WHO CLAIM THE TITLE, "THE GIRL OF ANANAI."
STEP.
WHISPER
WHISPER
THEY SAID THAT THE GUARDS WERE SO OVER WHELMED BY HER THAT THEY WERE FORCED TO BRING HER ALONG.
SHE LOOKS SO UGLY, YET HER PRESENCE IS OVER-WHELMING.
AND IF YOU LOOK CLOSELY AT HER FACE, YOU'LL SEE SHE IS BEAUTIFUL, LIKE A FAIRY.
OH, CAN YOU BELIEVE IT!? SHE'S SO DIRTY AND DISGUSTING!
!!
BEAUTIFUL!! 美!!
HMMM. I DON'T THINK THAT'S PRINCESS KAGUYA THOUGH...
AFTER ALL, PRINCESS KAGUYA WOULDN'T HAVE SILVER HAIR!
SILVER-HAIR..
SHE LOOKS PRETTY CONCEITED.
LIKE I CAN HELP IT!
SHE IGNORED US!
AND SHE LAUGHED AT US, TO BOOT.
ANYONE ELSE STUCK IN THOSE MOUNTAINS WOULD END UP JUST AS DIRTY.
SMIRK

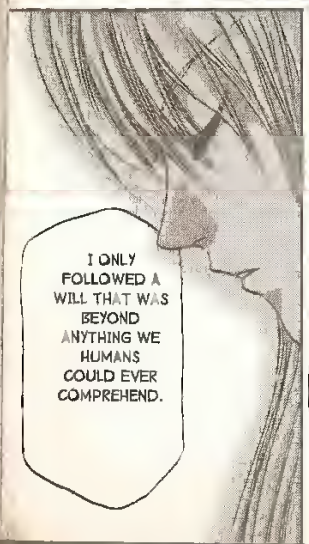
PRINCESS..
PLEASE SHOW THESE PEOPLE YOUR EYES!
WHO THINKS THEY COULD FOOL US SIMPLY BY CHANGING THE COLOR OF THEIR EYES OR THEIR HAIR?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT. JUST STAY QUIET AND DON'T LOOK AT ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR
BA...BA... BAMBI-CHAN, EVERYONE'S WATCHING.
EXPRESSION-LESS, EXPRESSION-LESS
EXPRESSION-LESS..
EXPRESSION-LESS..
WHETHER SHE IS THE REAL DEAL OR NOT..
YOU WILL KNOW VERY SOON.

HAH!
HA HA HA HA! DID YOU HEAR THE NEWS, DEIMION?!
GU WA AA AA AA HA HA HA...
IT'S HER! THEY SAY THAT THEY MAY HAVE FOUND THE GIRL, YOU KNOW.
YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN, HAVE YOU?
..HEH.
SHE'S BEAUTIFUL
DON'T WORRY
IF YOU JUST KEEP QUIET, YOU REALLY DO LOOK THE PART.
WHISPER
WHAT A MYSTERIOUS GIRL.
COULD THIS BE------!?

I'VE HAD IT WITH IDOU.
WOULDN'T MASTER IDOU BE A BETTER CHOICE THEN?
AS I SUSPECTED, USING IDOU FORCES THE WATCHFUL EYES OF THE FIFTH WORLD TO SCRUTINIZE MY ACTIVITIES EVEN FURTHER.
THEN WHAT ABOUT OLD MAN MESHIE.
HE CAN'T BE TRUSTED.
BESIDES, HE HAS TIES TO THE SECOND WORLD'S LIVING INCARNATION OF DEATH, THAT IDIOT SEEU..
TEE HEE
SNICKER
SNICKER
OH, BUT YOUR HIGHNESS.. COULD YOU NOT SIMPLY DISPOSE OF THE MAD PRINCE WITH YOUR NOX LIGHT AND PUT AN END TO YOUR WORRIES?
HA HA HA HA.
OH, DON'T LAUGH AT HER.
EH.?
DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S A LITTLE INSENSITIVE CONSIDERING THE GIRL'S ABOUT TO BE HANGED?
HEY, INQUIRING MINDS NEED TO KNOW!
...ALMOST AS AMUSING AS WHEN MY LORDSHIP COULD ONLY BRING HIMSELF TO ASK WHETHER THE "PRINCESS OF CHOOSING" WAS "HOT OR NOT."
SO GO, DEIMION,
PLAY THE PART OF MY EMISSARY WELL.
AFTER ALL, ONLY AN ELITE FEW CAN DISCERN THE TRUTH FROM THE SPURIOUS.
URRMMM.. ..YES, THAT WAS QUITE..AN AMUSING MOMENT AS I RECALL.
..WHEN HE REPORTED TO ME THAT, "SHE WAS QUITE LOVELY." WA HA HA HA! I CAN HARDLY WAIT TO SEE HER!
IT'S THE GIRL THAT IDOU WAS PREVIOUSLY ALL FLUSTERED OVER..
I CANNOT TRUST THOSE FROM THE FOURTH PLANET.

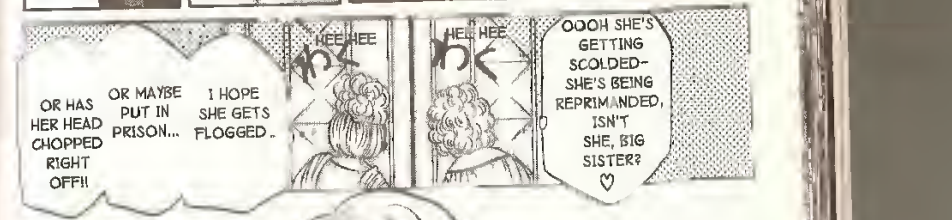

...A HORSE FROM A GOURD*.
NOW THIS IS WHAT YOU WOULD CERTAINLY CLASSIFY..
A HORSE FROM A GOURD— A JAPANESE EXPRESSION THAT REFERS A SITUATION WHERE YOU JOKE ABOUT SOMETHING AND THEN IT ACTUALLY HAPPENS
AND NOW FATHER'S SO UTTERLY FURIOUS.
BUT WHO WOULD HAVE EVER THOUGHT THAT SHE HAD TAKEN OFF WITH THE "PRINCESS OF CHOOSING"?
NOW THEN..
...THE ONE ALL THE SCIENTISTS COOED OVER BECAUSE SHE WAS SO SMART..
THAT BEAUTIFUL LITTLE SILVER-HAIRED GIRL...
AFTER ALL, I PLANTED THAT HAIR IN PALACE SHIINA TO GET THAT ANNOYING GIRL IN TROUBLE..
YES, EXPLAIN TO US WHY YOU ROAMED THE MOUNTAINS OF TELENE AS IF YOU WERE TRYING TO GET AWAY FROM US.
...MISS BAMVIVIRIE.
WHY DON'T YOU ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN YOUR ACTIONS..
WHAT A STUPID GIRL..
...TO THINK FOR EVEN AN INSTANT THAT YOU HAD ANY RIGHT AT ALL TO SPEAK TO ME ABOUT MY SWORD.
AH.....
...NOW THEN..
BRING HER TO ME, DEIMION..
KYAAAAAAA---
BRING ME MY OFFICIAL, LOVELY, RAVEN-HEADED BRIDE-TO-BE.

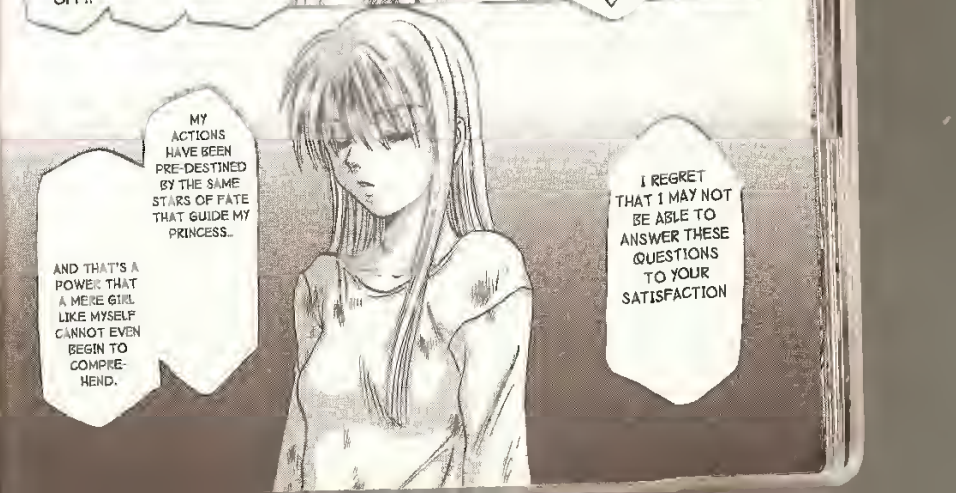

NOT LONG AFTER WE BEGAN OUR JOURNEYS THROUGH THE FOREST, MY PRINCESS FOUND THAT WONDROUS, GIANT ROOSTER.
IT IS MY BELIEF THAT THIS MEETING WAS THE GOAL OF OUR JOURNEY.
-AFTER ALL, IT IS A ROOSTER THAT MARKS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW DAY, IS IT NOT? I FELT THIS WAS SURELY AN AUSPICIOUS EVENT INDEED.
STRAIGHT FACE
I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M CAPABLE OF SPOUTING SUCH IDIOCY.
STIFF FACE
WHAT DOES SHE MEAN BY THIS GUIDING STAR THING?
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, FOR MY CHRISTMAS PLAY A LONG TIME AGO, I PLAYED A STAR...
AAHHH!
BUT HE LAUGHED AT ME BECAUSE HE SAID I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND...
I WAS A STAR..
SO I TOLD HIM THAT I WASN'T A RADISH..
BUT BIG BROTHER THOUGHT I WAS A RADISH..


I ONLY FOLLOWED A WILL THAT WAS BEYOND ANYTHING WE HUMANS COULD EVER COMPREHEND.

SO ARE YOU SAYING THEN..
THAT YOU DID NOT HAVE THE WILL TO RUN AWAY?
YES.

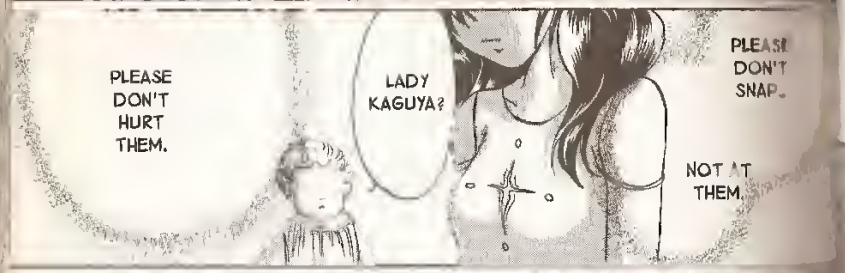
IT TRULY IS A MIRACULOUS ROOSTER BUT...

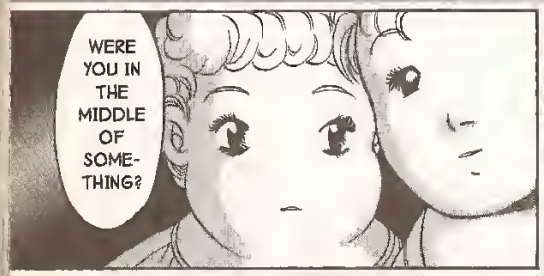

OR HAS HER HEAD CHOPPED RIGHT OFF!!
OR MAYBE PUT IN PRISON...
I HOPE SHE GETS FLOGGED..
HEE HEE
HEE HEE
OOOH SHE'S GETTING SCOLDED- SHE'S BEING REPRIMANDED, ISN'T SHE, BIG SISTER? ♡


MY ACTIONS HAVE BEEN PRE-DESTINED BY THE SAME STARS OF FATE THAT GUIDE MY PRINCESS..
AND THAT'S A POWER THAT A MERE GIRL LIKE MYSELF CANNOT EVEN BEGIN TO COMPREHEND.
I REGRET THAT I MAY NOT BE ABLE TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS TO YOUR SATISFACTION

SHE HAS A POWER ...
... THAT LEGENDS ARE MADE OF.
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT BEFORE
A ROOSTER !?
YES, IT'S A GIANT ROOSTER!
I DON'T KNOW..HE JUST DOESN'T SEEM HUMAN TO ME
OID YOU SEE THAT ONE ATTENDANT ?
NO..
THAT HORSE IS A MAGNIFI-CENT BEAST.
BUT MORE THAN ANY THING HAVE YOU SEEN THAT PRINCESS? WHAT A LOVELY AND MYSTERIOUS BEAUTY SHE HAS..
..AND!!
THAT SILVER-HAIRED GIRL..SHE'S JUST LIKE A FAIRY..
SHE'S SO BEAUTIFUL..
UMM I REALLY THINK YOU'RE MISTAKEN—
BAMBI-CHAN ...
ANY MOMENT NOW..
I THINK MY FACE IS GOING TO FREEZE LIKE THIS
WELL, YES..
BUT...
TEE HEE
YOU'RE GOING TO SAVE THE WORLD, REMEM-BER?
THEY'D LOSE ALL THEIR RESPECT FOR YOU AND IT WOULD BE OVER FOR US
NO COMPLAINING ...
JUST THINK WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU START-ED ACTING LIKE YOU NORMALLY DO.
HMM ...
BREE---ZY.

IF THIS PERSON WERE EVER TO SNAP, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO STOP HIM.
BUT IT'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT.
I CHOOSE TO BE HERE.
SOMETIMES I CATCH KAGAMI JUST STARING AT ME.


PLEASE DON'T HURT THEM.
LADY KAGUYA?
PLEASE DON'T SNAP.
NOT AT THEM.

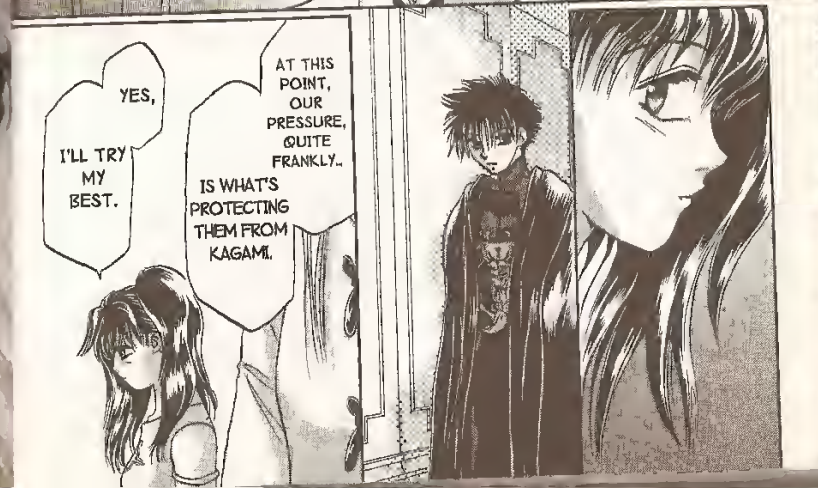

WERE YOU IN THE MIDDLE OF SOME-THING?

DARN IT! I TOTALLY FORGOT MY EMOTIONLESS FACE!!
OH, NO!

Y..
..YES?
HUH!!

...MAYBE I JUMPED THE GUN ON THAT DECISION..
I HAVE ALL THESE EYES UPON ME!
I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK THAT..
EVERY ONE'S STARING AT ME

...IT'S NOT GOING TO BE YOU WHO'S GOING TO TAKE THE HEAT.
REMEMBER, IF ONE OF THEM EVEN TRIES TO FORCE SOMETHING ON YOU..
JUST CALM DOWN.


YES, I'LL TRY MY BEST.
AT THIS POINT, OUR PRESSURE, QUITE FRANKLY.. IS WHAT'S PROTECTING THEM FROM KAGAMI.

REALLY...

AFTER A DIVINATION SESSION, THE PRINCESS OFTEN ENTERS A TRANCELIKE STATE.

DURING SUCH A TRANCE, I ASK THAT YOU DO NOT DISTURB THE PRINCESS AND REFRAIN FROM SPEAKING TO HER.

PLEASE FORGIVE OUR INTER-RUPTION.

OHH-...

NOW THAT'S THAT, BUT...

IT WON'T BE LONG UNTIL THESE FOLKS UNCOVER THE TRUTH.

.....

NO EMOTIONS -

EVEN PEOPLE I JUST MET IN PASSING... I DON'T WANT THEM TO DIE.

...OR ANY OF MY FRIENDS ...

...OR MY MOM, MY DAD, MY BIG BROTHER...

I WOULDN'T WANT BAMBI-CHAN TO DIE...

IF THE WORLD WAS REALLY GOING TO END...

I REALLY DON'T SEE THE USE IN IT AT ALL...

I CAN PICK OUT THE ONE BLANK CARD FROM A PILE

SO WHAT, THAT I CAN...?

BUT IF ONE PERSON TELLS ME THAT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL...

THEN THAT'S THE ONLY REASON I NEED.

BECAUSE I'M STUPID...

BECAUSE I...

COULD I...

COULD I EVER BECOME THAT STRONG?

I DON'T THINK I COULD.

I REALLY DON'T THINK THAT ANYONE COULD SAVE THE WORLD

I'M NOT PUTTING MYSELF DOWN OR ANYTHING.

BUT STILL. ALL THAT TIME IN THE FOREST...

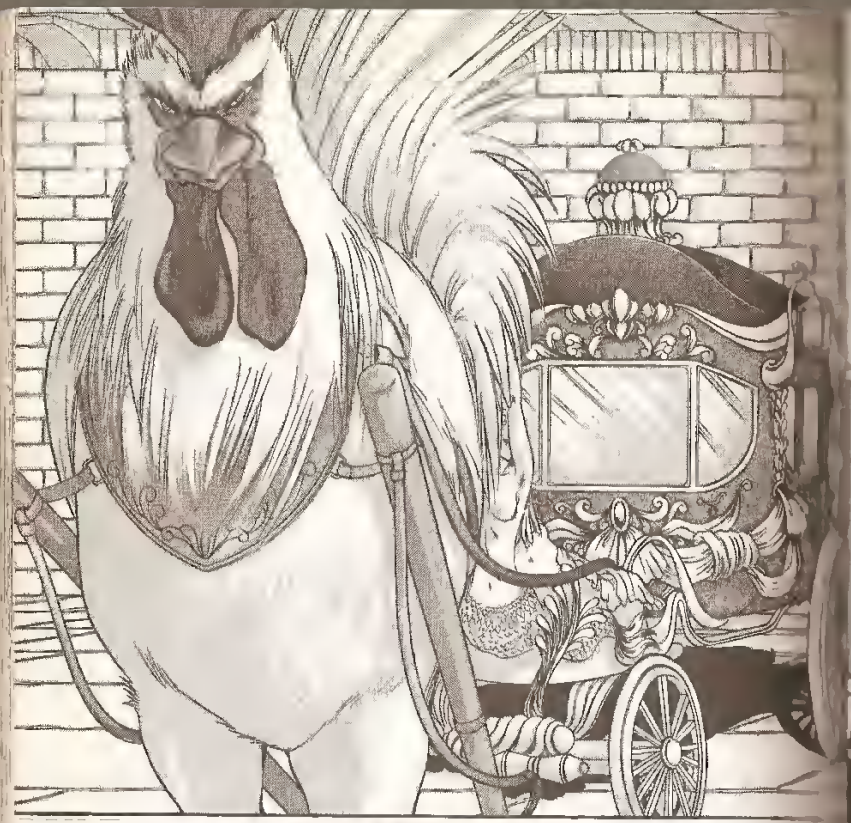
ALL THAT TIME WE WERE ON THE RUN, I THOUGHT...

.....

MAYBE I WAS INFLUENCED BY A SAD STORY I BARELY UNDERSTOOD...

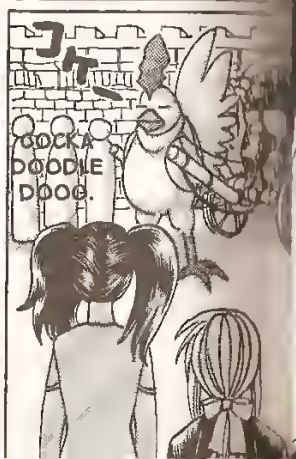
AND JUST GOT SWEPT UP IN THE MOMENTUM OF THINGS?

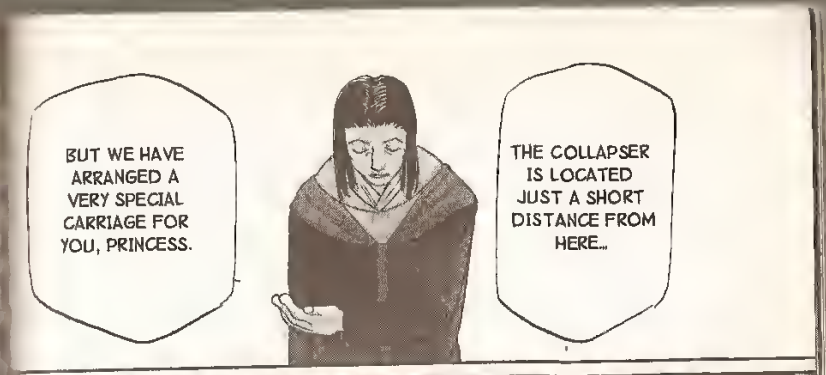
BUT TO THINK...
HEY...
GET UP.
...THAT YOUNG LADY MIGHT POSSIBLY BE THE "GIRL OF ANANAI."
ALL RIGHT. COME OVER HERE
HOW UTTERLY RUDE...
NONETHELESS, IT'S PROBABLY SAFER FOR ME NOT TO OPEN MY BEAK RIGHT NOW.
THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO TRY.
...
SEE?
IT LISTENS GOOD, DOESN'T IT?
I THINK IT'S PRETTY INTELLIGENT ...JUST LIKE A HORSE.
NOTHING SPECIAL AT ALL.
I THINK SO, TOO...
REALLY...
I THINK SHE'S JUST A PLAIN OL' BORING GIRL, FATHER.
HMMM...
SO YOU THINK SO TOO, DO YOU?
GEO ISN'T LOOKING FOR HER, TOO... RIGHT?
YUM YUM
I THINK THE ONLY PERSON WE HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IS SHIINA MOL BAMVIVIRIE.
JUST GET HER ALONE AND I BET YOU SHE'LL DO ANYTHING YOU DESIRE.
BUT WHAT I DO KNOW IS SHE'S VERY HESI-TANT.
I DON'T KNOW IF THAT LADY KAGUYA IS THE REAL THING OR NOT.

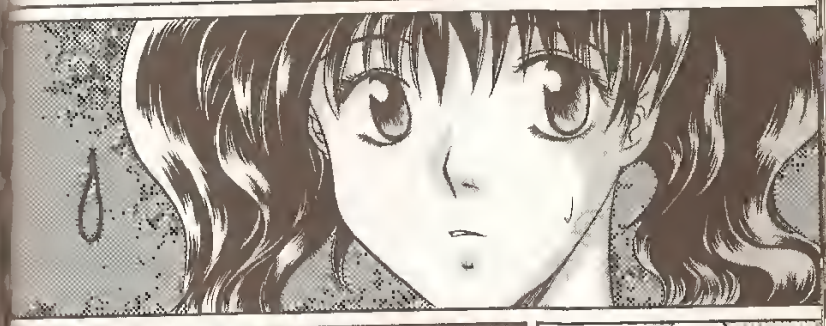


LET'S GO!
LET'S JUST GO FOR NOW.

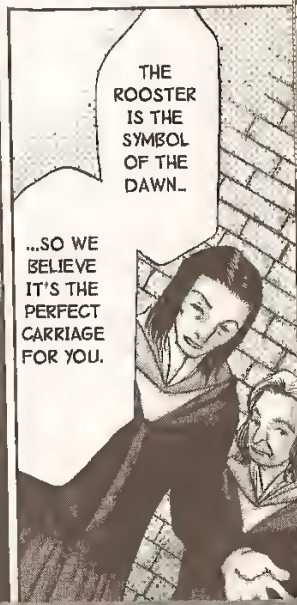
HMM. I'M NOT QUITE SURE HOW TO TAKE THIS.
YES, I'M NOT QUITE SURE HOW TO HANDLE THIS MYSELF.
SHOULD I BE LAUGHING RIGHT NOW?

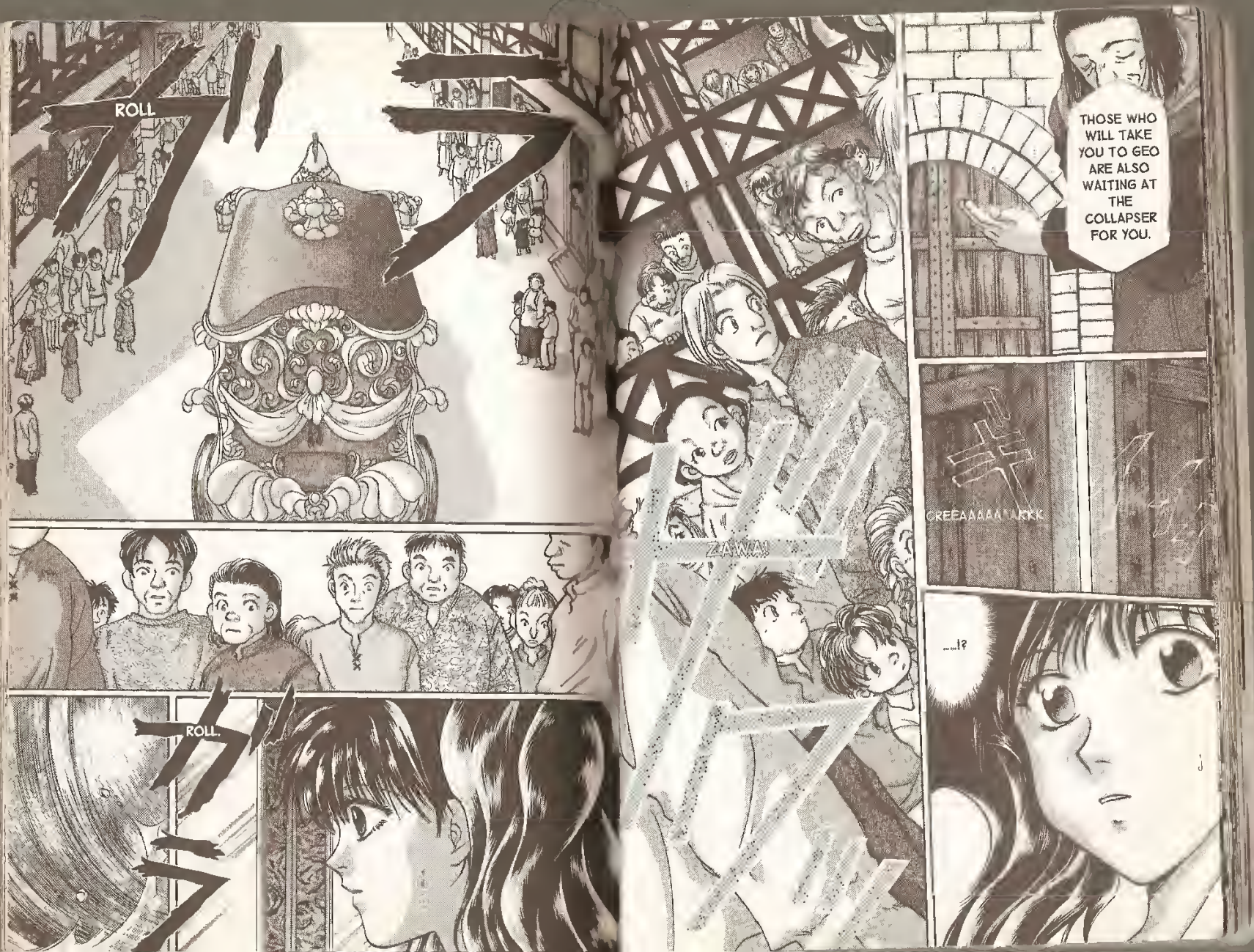

コケ
COCK-A-DOODLE-DOOO.


BUT WE HAVE ARRANGED A VERY SPECIAL CARRIAGE FOR YOU, PRINCESS.
THE COLLAPSER IS LOCATED JUST A SHORT DISTANCE FROM HERE...



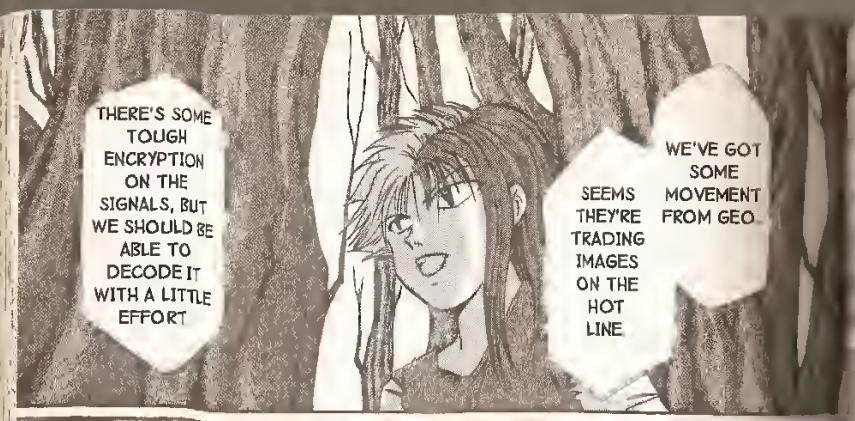
AS I SAID BEFORE, WE WON'T LEAVE THE PRINCESS' SIDE
IF THE ATTENDANTS DO NOT MIND, WE HAVE A SEPARATE CARRIAGE JUST FOR YOU.

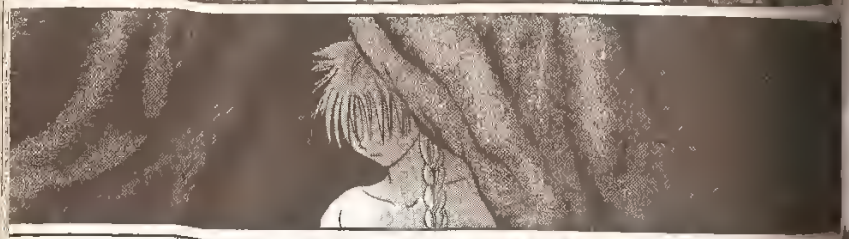

THE ROOSTER IS THE SYMBOL OF THE DAWN..
...SO WE BELIEVE IT'S THE PERFECT CARRIAGE FOR YOU.

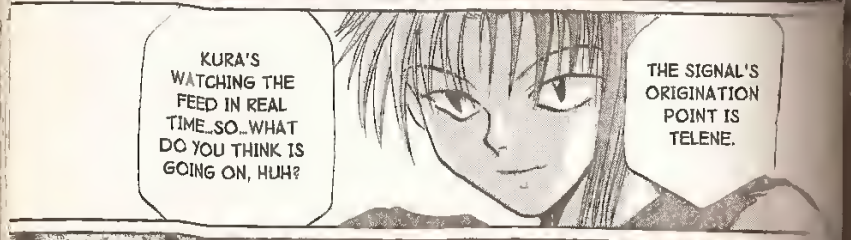

ROLL
ROLL
ZAWA
THOSE WHO WILL TAKE YOU TO GEO ARE ALSO WAITING AT THE COLLAPSER FOR YOU.
GREEAAAAAARKK
...!?

WHAT CAN WE DO? AFTER ALL, IN THIS COUNTRY...
I THOUGHT THERE WAS A GAG ORDER IN PLACE.
HMM.. THEY MUST HAVE HEARD THE RUMORS.
OH, PLEASE.. THEY'RE JUST AWED BY IT ALL.
...I DIDN'T KNOW THAT SO MANY TELENIAN PEASANTS BELIEVED IN THE LEGEND OF THE "GIRL OF ANANAI."
IT'S JUST A LEGEND, ISN'T IT?
BUT, THAT GIRL...
GIGGLE
SNICKER
ROLL
...SHE JUST MIGHT GET SCARED OFF BY THEM.
SNICKER

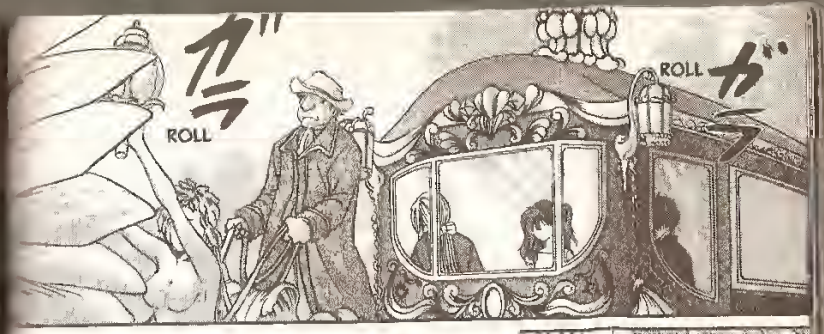
WWWWAAAAAHHHH!!!
HURRAY!!
HURRAH!!
HUZZAH!!
ROLL
ROLL
ROLL

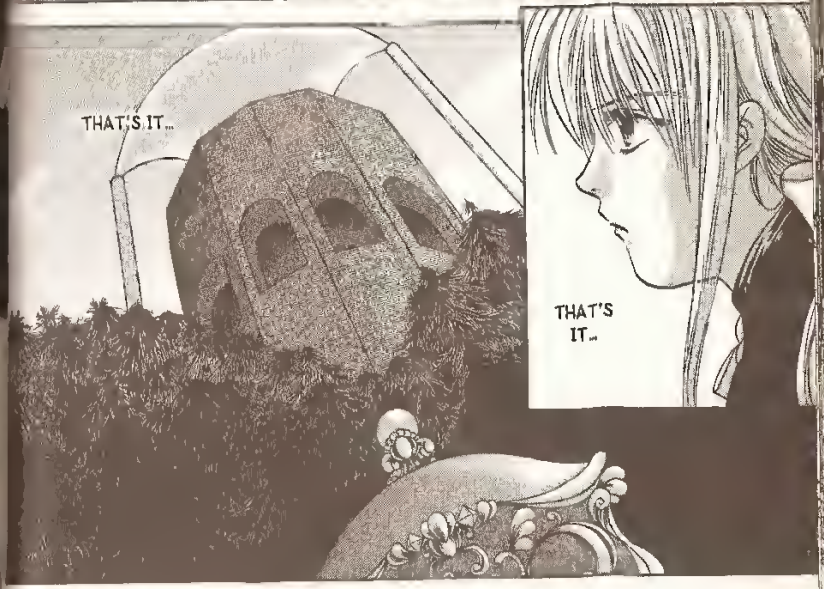

THERE'S SOME TOUGH ENCRYPTION ON THE SIGNALS, BUT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO DECODE IT WITH A LITTLE EFFORT
SEEMS THEY'RE TRADING IMAGES ON THE HOT LINE
WE'VE GOT SOME MOVEMENT FROM GEO.



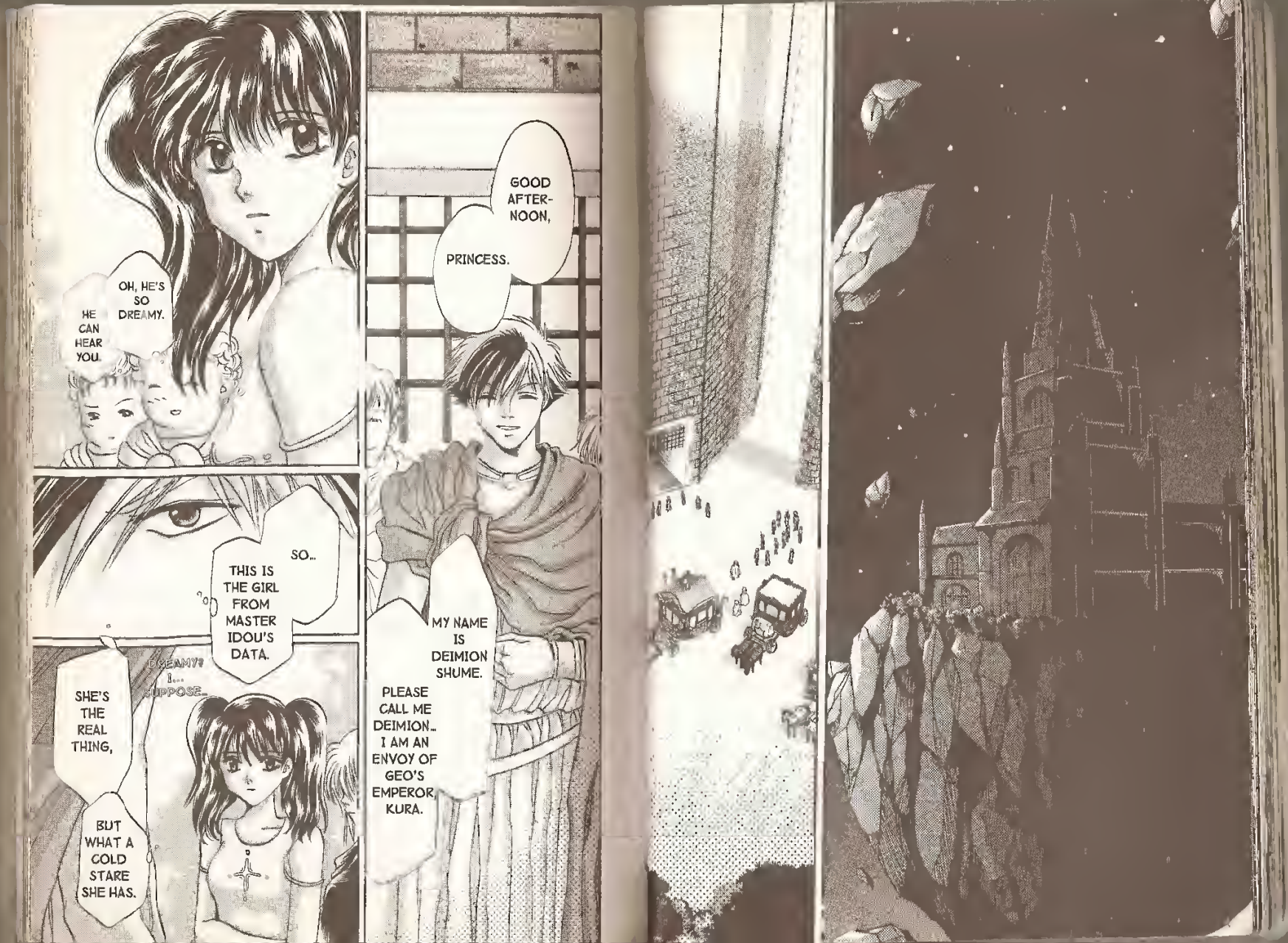

KURA'S WATCHING THE FEED IN REAL TIME...SO...WHAT DO YOU THINK IS GOING ON, HUH?
THE SIGNAL'S ORIGINATION POINT IS TELENE.

SEND IT TO SEEU.


ROLL
ROLL

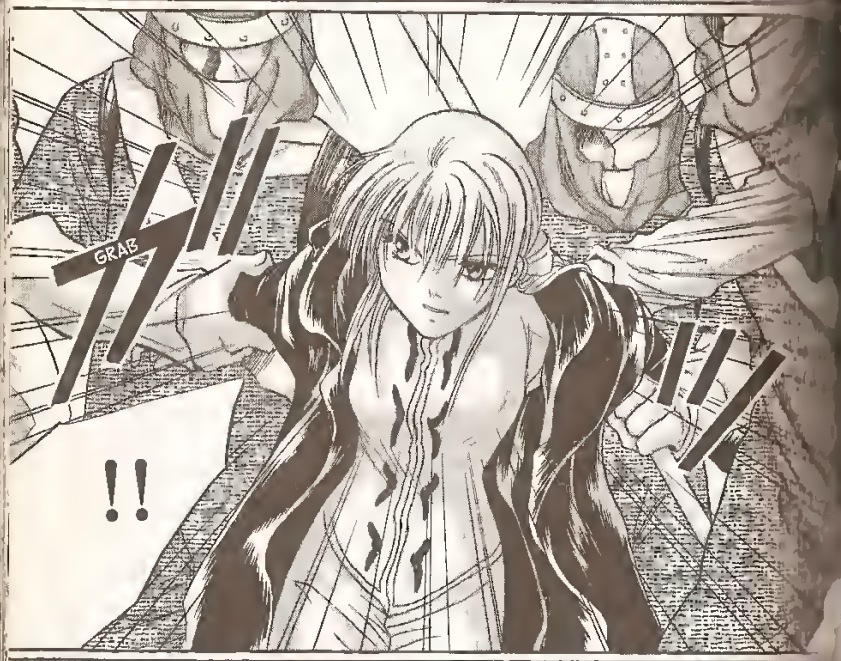

THAT'S IT...
THAT'S IT...

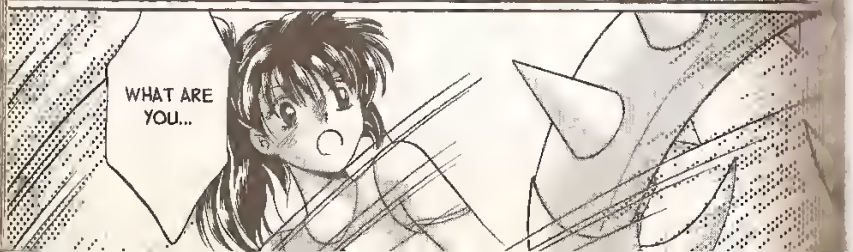
HEY, OLD MAN.


OH, HE'S SO DREAMY.
HE CAN HEAR YOU.
GOOD AFTER-NOON,
PRINCESS.
SO..
THIS IS THE GIRL FROM MASTER IDOU'S DATA.
MY NAME IS DEIMION SHUME.
PLEASE CALL ME DEIMION.. I AM AN ENVOY OF GEO'S EMPEROR, KURA.
SHE'S THE REAL THING,
DREAMY? I... SUPPOSE.
BUT WHAT A COLD STARE SHE HAS.

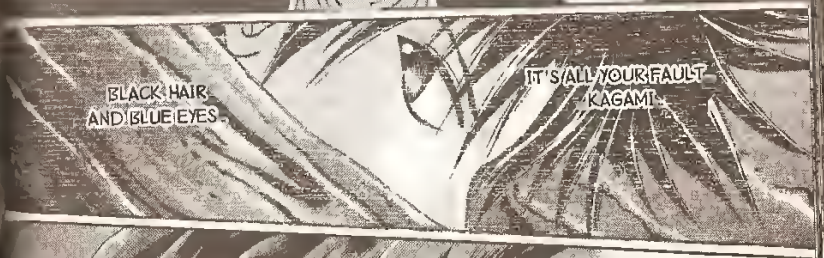
MY, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL GIRL!
PLEASE ALLOW ME ONE MOMENT.
WHO IS THIS GIRL BY HER SIDE?
HMMM
I SHALL HAVE SOMEONE BRING MY LORD INFORMATION REGARDING HER.
SHE A LOVELY PRINCESS, MY LORD. THE PEOPLE WILL SURELY ACCEPT SOMEONE LIKE HER.
HMM...
BUT...
WHAT'S THE MATTER, MY LORD?
AND QUITE AN ANTIQUE AT THAT.
IT'S A DOLL...
A ROOSTER?
I SEE..
SO THIS IS THE DOLL IN THE REPORT, IS IT?
THIS PERSON..
I KNOW YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO JUDGE SOMEONE WITHOUT KNOWING HIM, BUT..
HE FRIGHTENS ME...
NOT BAD!!
OOOO HHHHH!!
HE SURE LIKES 'EM YOUNG!!
SO THIS IS IDOU'S TYPE, EH?
SLAP!
ぱんっ
OH, WAIT A SECOND. I SEE NOW..
SHE'S CUTE... NOT BAD AT ALL.

NNNNNN AAAAH HHHHH!?
THAT'S IT!
SILVER HAIRED
..!!

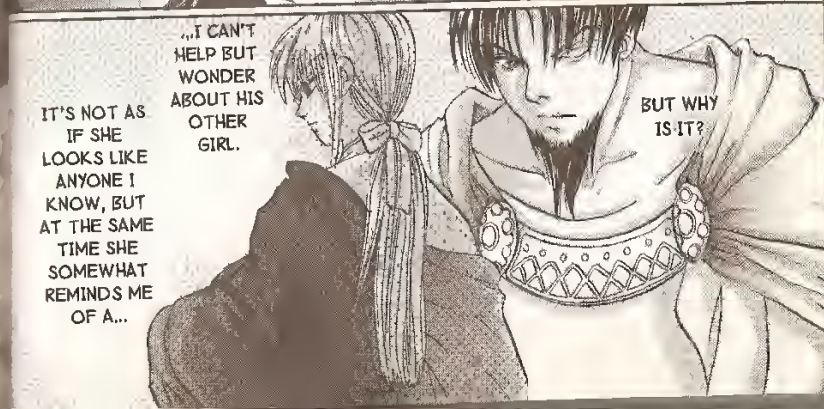

GRAB
!!


WHAT ARE YOU...

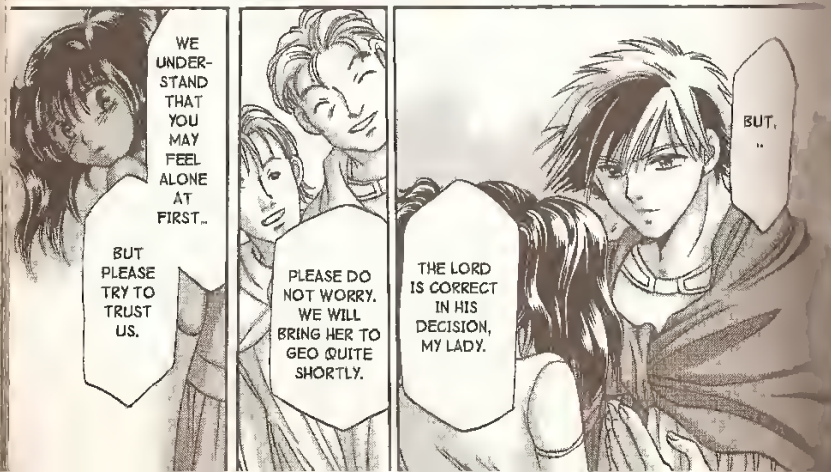
BUT...
EVEN THOUGH I KNOW IT'S A DOLL...
I CAN'T HELP BUT BE A BIT SURPRISED.

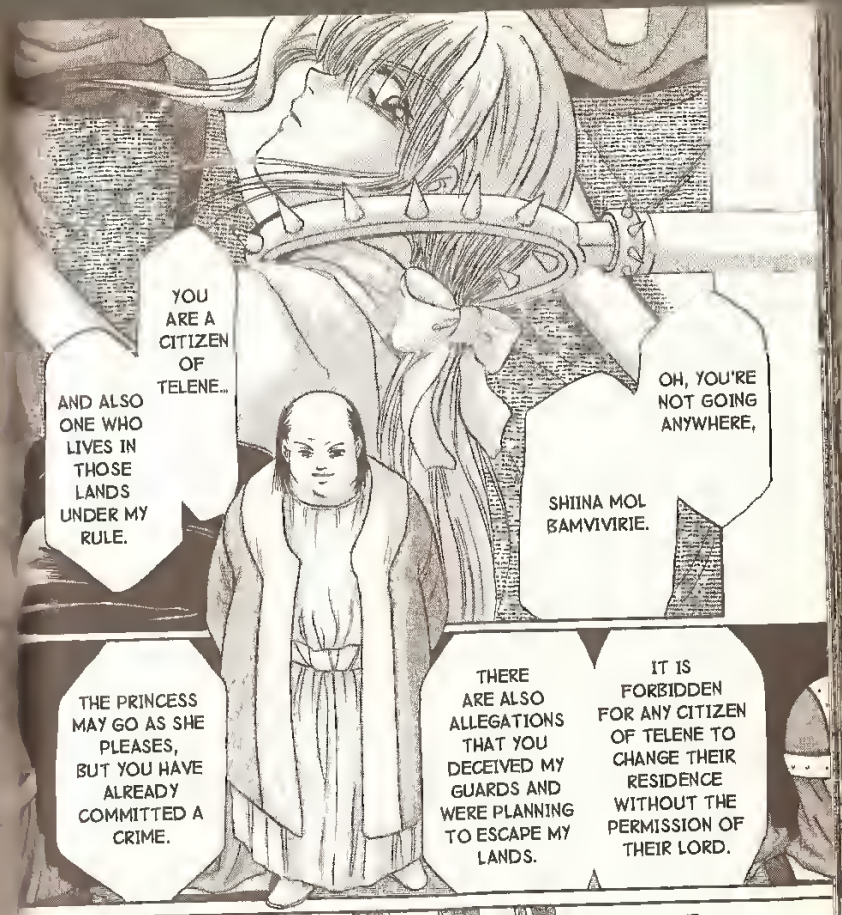

BLACK HAIR AND BLUE EYES...
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT KAGAMI...

I HAVE A FEELING SHE'LL BE RATHER TOUGH AND STUBBORN BECAUSE OF YOU.
AS QUIET AND HARMLESS AS SHE SEEMS...


IT'S NOT AS IF SHE LOOKS LIKE ANYONE I KNOW, BUT AT THE SAME TIME SHE SOMEWHAT REMINDS ME OF A...
...I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER ABOUT HIS OTHER GIRL.
BUT WHY IS IT?

PRINCESS ...
PLEASE STAND BACK.
I WILL TAKE CARE OF ALL THIS, AND HER, AFTER WE REACH GEO.
BAMBI-CHAN!!


WE UNDER-STAND THAT YOU MAY FEEL ALONE AT FIRST..
BUT PLEASE TRY TO TRUST US.
PLEASE DO NOT WORRY. WE WILL BRING HER TO GEO QUITE SHORTLY.
THE LORD IS CORRECT IN HIS DECISION, MY LADY.
BUT, ..

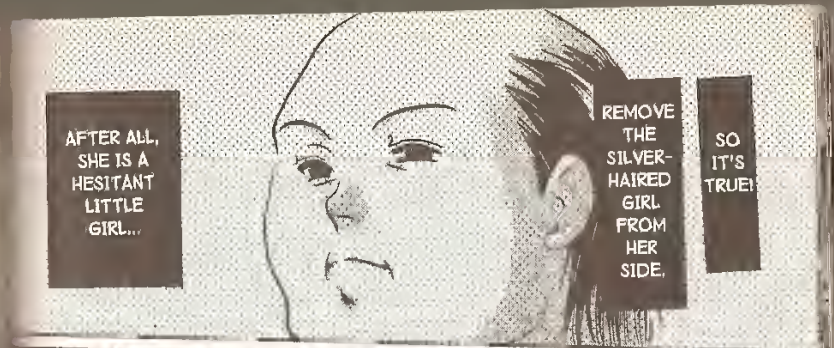

YOU ARE A CITIZEN OF TELENE..
AND ALSO ONE WHO LIVES IN THOSE LANDS UNDER MY RULE.
OH, YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE,
SHIINA MOL BAMVIVIRIE.
THE PRINCESS MAY GO AS SHE PLEASES, BUT YOU HAVE ALREADY COMMITTED A CRIME.
THERE ARE ALSO ALLEGATIONS THAT YOU DECEIVED MY GUARDS AND WERE PLANNING TO ESCAPE MY LANDS.
IT IS FORBIDDEN FOR ANY CITIZEN OF TELENE TO CHANGE THEIR RESIDENCE WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF THEIR LORD.

!!
I MYSELF WILL ACCOMPANY THE PRINCESS.
FOR YOU TO EVEN THINK YOU COULD GO TO ANOTHER WORLD IS UTTERLY ABSURD.

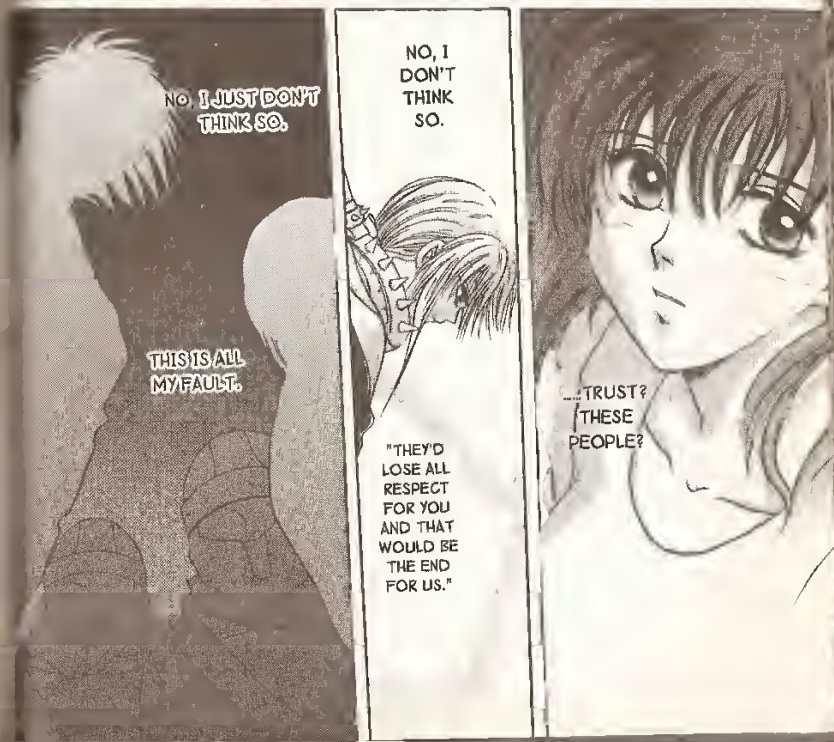
I MUSTN'T LOOK AT BAMBI-CHAN.
SHE CAN SEE RIGHT THROUGH ME.
BUT IF I BACK OFF NOW, IT'S OVER!!
FROM THE VERY FIRST STEP, THEY CAN SEE THAT I'M WEAK.

OVER!!
KAGAMI!!

IT'S ALL...


AFTER ALL, SHE IS A HESITANT LITTLE GIRL...
REMOVE THE SILVER-HAIRED GIRL FROM HER SIDE.
SO IT'S TRUE!

...WHO WILL BEND TO YOUR WILL, NO MATTER WHAT YOU DEMAND OF HER.

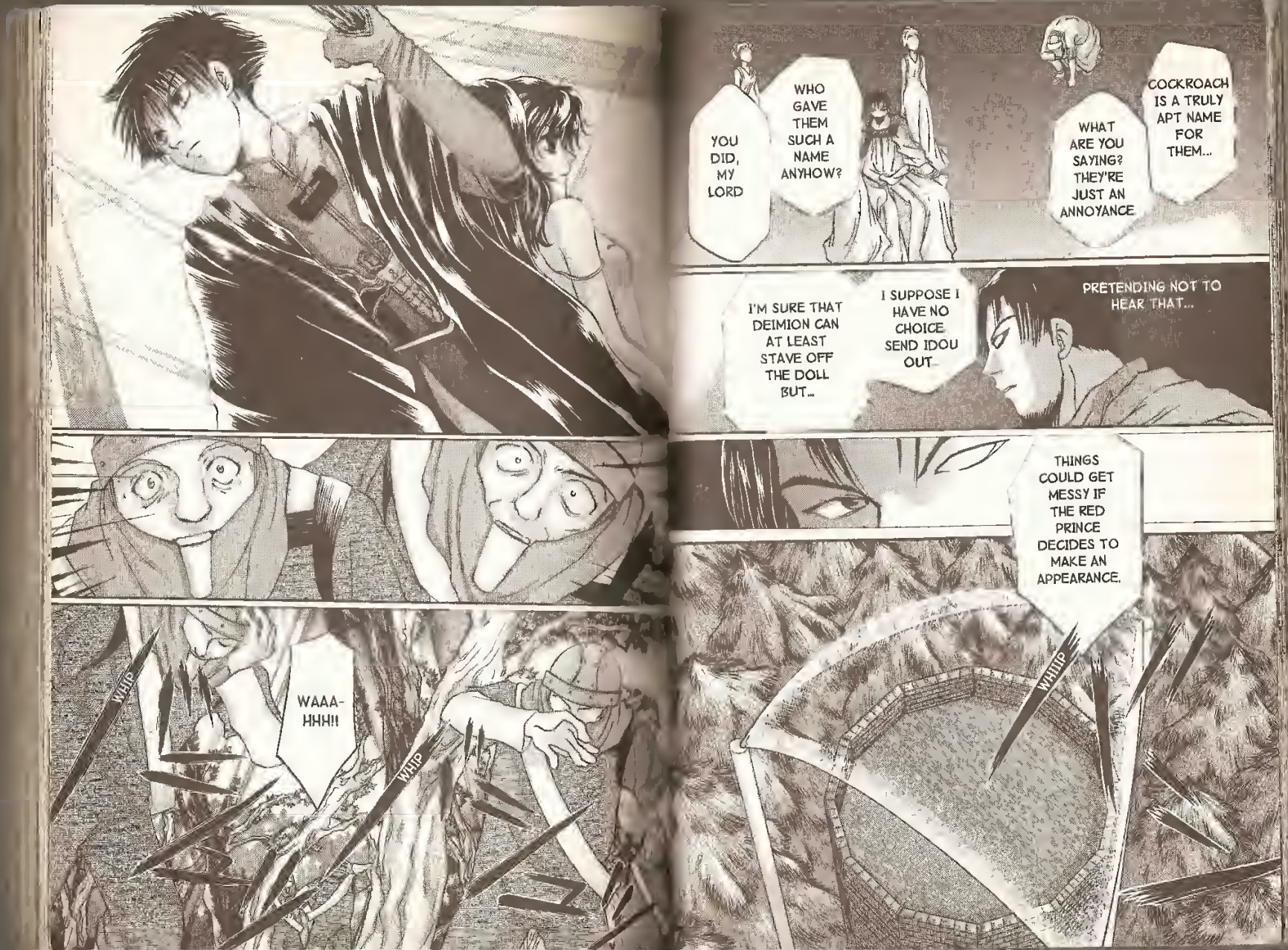

NO, I JUST DON'T THINK SO.
THIS IS ALL MY FAULT.
NO, I DON'T THINK SO.
"THEY'D LOSE ALL RESPECT FOR YOU AND THAT WOULD BE THE END FOR US."
...TRUST? THESE PEOPLE?

WHIP
PRINCESS!!
WHIP
MY HANDS ARE SHAKING.
TREMBLING..
...BUT..
DEIMION!
LET HIM COME HERE HIMSELF.
IF THIS IS HOW IT WILL BE, I WILL NOT GO TO GEO.
PLEASE TELL HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY

NO NEED TO HURT THEM, THOUGH..
I DO NOT WANT TO SEE ANY UNNEEDED BLOODSHED.
GET THOSE PEOPLE OFF HER NOW!
THAT'S RIGHT
WHIP
IF I'VE MADE THE RIGHT DECISION THEN THERE'LL BE NO REASON FOR HIM TO ATTACK ANYONE.
SO LONG AS I POINT OUT THE RIGHT PATH TO HIM AHEAD OF TIME.
WHIP
WHATEVER ACTIONS KAGAMI TAKES OF HIS OWN WILL..
WHIP
I CAN STOP.
WHIP

EMPEROR KURA!!
THEY APPEAR TO BE ROACHES FROM THE FIFTH WORLD.
WE'VE MANAGED TO CAPTURE TWO INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS.
THAT MEANS THAT...
...THIS LOVELY SITE'S GOING STRAIGHT THROUGH TO THE FIFTH WORLD AGAIN, AIN'T IT?..
HOW CAN IT BE THAT NO MATTER HOW MANY OF THEM WE CRUSH, IT'S NEVER ENOUGH- THEY'RE ALWAYS CRAWLING OUT AND ABOUT AGAIN!?
ROOOAAA-CCHHHES?

BUT...
ALRIGHT, THEN..
WE'RE GOING TO SEND YOU THEIR CO-ORDINATES RIGHT NOW.
WELL, WHAT DO YOU THINK? ..
ARE THE IMAGES CLEAR ENOUGH, PRINCE SEEU?
THEY'VE BROKEN THE ENCRYPTION..
WE'LL SEND YOU THE IMAGES.


YOU DID, MY LORD
WHO GAVE THEM SUCH A NAME ANYHOW?
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? THEY'RE JUST AN ANNOYANCE
COCKROACH IS A TRULY APT NAME FOR THEM...
I'M SURE THAT DEIMION CAN AT LEAST STAVE OFF THE DOLL BUT...
I SUPPOSE I HAVE NO CHOICE SEND IDOU OUT
PRETENDING NOT TO HEAR THAT...
THINGS COULD GET MESSY IF THE RED PRINCE DECIDES TO MAKE AN APPEARANCE.
WAAA-HHH!!
WHIP
WHIP
WHIP

HOW PERFECT YOU ARE TO BE MY LORD AND HIS HIGHNESS KURA'S BRIDE!!
HOW ABSOLUTELY WONDERFUL!
YOU ARE A BEAUTIFUL AND LOVELY PRINCESS!!
BAM
OH, PLEASE DO NOT WORRY, PRINCESS. IT'S TRUE MY LORD KURA MAY BE SOMEONE WHO HAS YET TO TIRE OF THE THOUSAND WOMEN IN HIS HAREM, BUT...
SPIN
WHHAATTT!?
I....
I DON'T THINK THAT'S THE ISSUE HERE!!
IN OTHER WORDS, HIS LOVE FOR YOU WOULD NOT BE ADULTEROUS AT ALL.
SPIN
PLEASE KNOW THAT THEY'RE JUST HIS LOVERS. HE HAS NEVER TAKEN AN OFFICIAL BRIDE AS OF YET.
PLEASE CALL YOUR SOLDIERS BACK NOW!!
WHIP
ZZAAAZZAAZZZA
HOW BARBARIC!!
EEK!
EEK!
YOU ARE A VERY COURAGEOUS PRINCESS, AREN'T YOU?
YOU SURPRISED ME, PRINCESS...
I DO APOLOGIZE.

AND HIS POWER IS A TOTAL SHAM.
YOUR KNIGHT IS BUT A TIN SOLDIER.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
THE SWORD, IT'S TURNING BLACK...!?
THE NOX LIGHT.
COULD IT TRULY BE?
A KNIGHT OF NOX!
FFFSSSSSH
HOWEVER, THERE IS SOMETHING THAT I MUST RELAY TO YOU FIRST.
I SEE NOTHING WRONG WITH ALLOWING THAT GIRL TO ACCOMPANY YOU TO GEO.
THEN LET US MAKE THAT THE ISSUE THEN, PRINCESS...
IT SEEMS YOUR KNIGHT DOES INDEED POSSESS THE ORGANIC GOLD...
BUT A DOLL IS A DOLL. HE DOES NOT HAVE A SOUL, SO HE CANNOT FULLY DRAW UPON THE POWERS OF A LIVING WEAPON.

SNORRT
YANK
WHOA!
CAN COST YOU YOUR-
NAJA, STAND BACK, PLEASE!
NEEIIIGGGHHH
SNORRT
NEEIIIGGGHHH
NAJA!!
SNORRT
SNORRT
NEEIIIGGGHHH

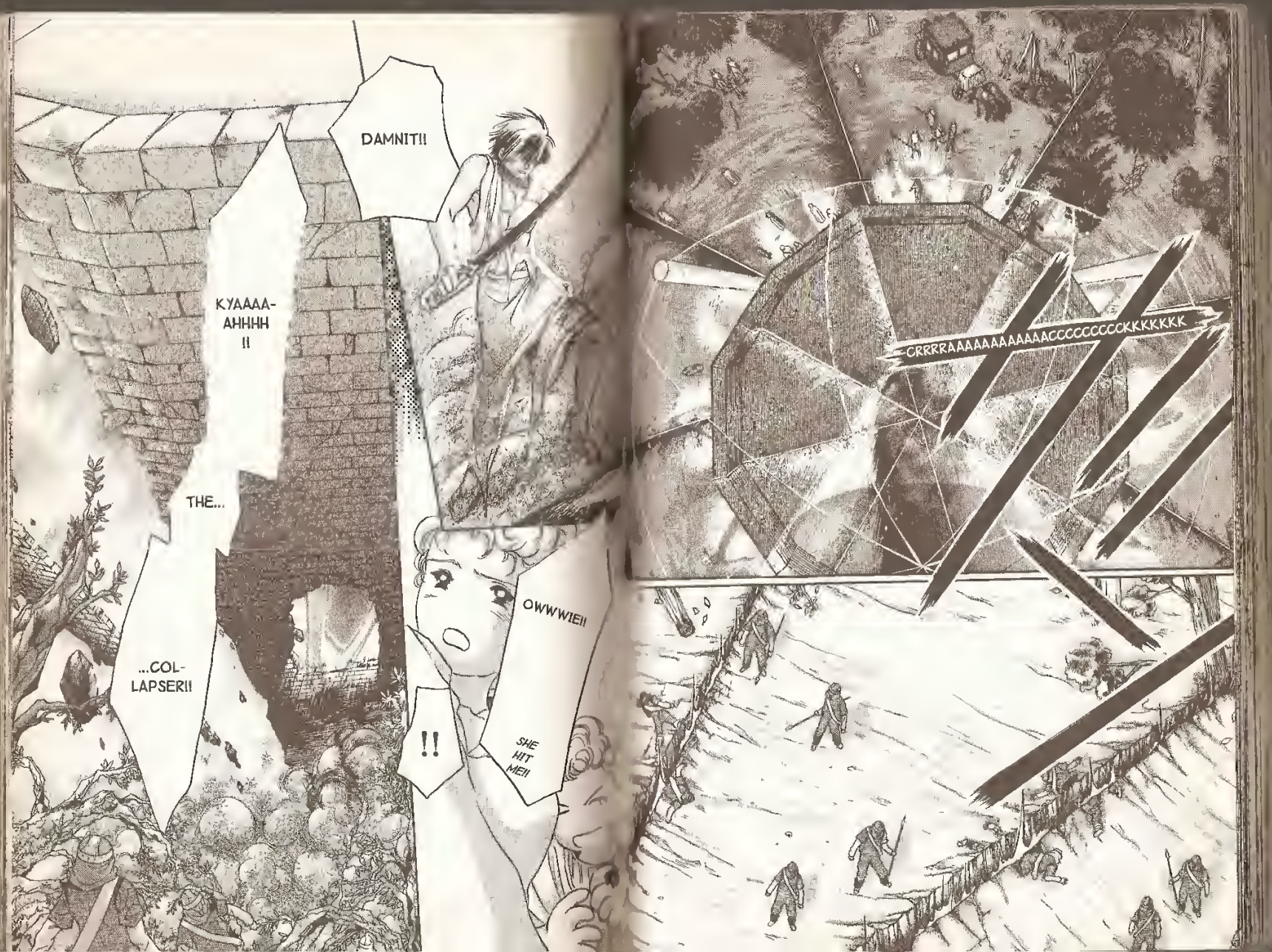
THEY CALL THOSE WHO HAVE GAINED A SPECIAL TRUST FROM THE EMPEROR AND PARTAKEN OF SUCH DROPLETS, THE KNIGHTS OF NOX...
THE LIVING WEAPON OF KURA...
...IS SAID AT TIMES TO RELEASE DROPLETS OF WATER AS DARK AS THE NIGHT ITSELF.
IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S ALMOST LIKE THIS MAN'S STRENGTH IS A COPY OF THE EMPEROR KURA'S OWN.
AND THESE KNIGHTS IN TURN SHARE THE POWER OF THE NOX LIGHT.
LET ME ADVISE YOU OF SOMETHING, DEAR LADY. THE EMPEROR'S BLADE IS CONSIDERED SACRED UPON GEO, TO SAY THE LEAST...
MERELY SPEAKING ITS NAME...
HOW UTTERLY OUTRA-GEOUS!!
IF EMPEROR KURA IS A DRAGON, THEN I AM BUT A LOWLY WORM...

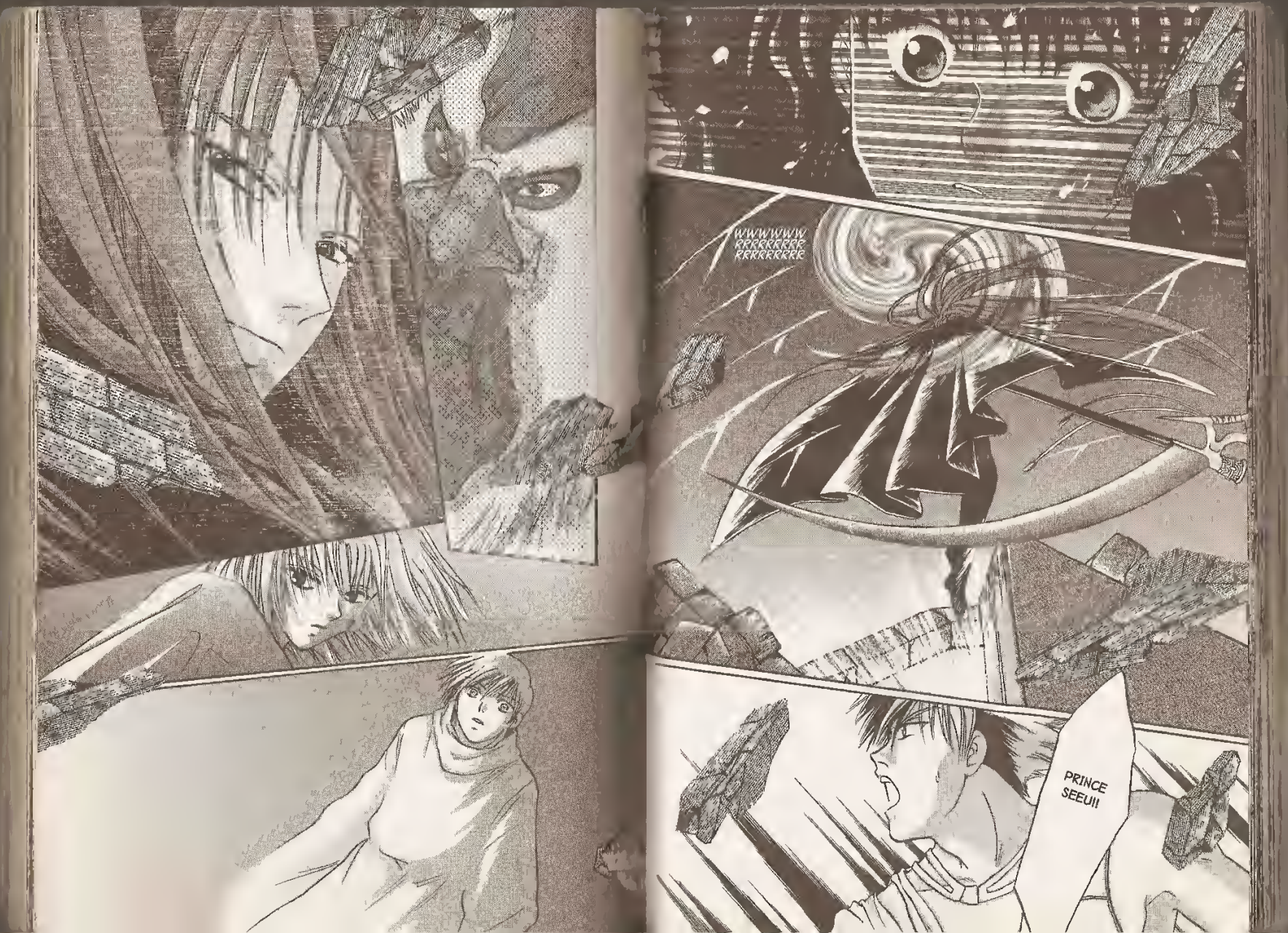
HOW COULD IT BE THAT YOU FOUND SUCH A CREATURE!?
BUT THEY ARE SAID TO BE NATIVE TO THE NINTH WORLD...
RED PERSPIRATION ?
IT MUST BE A BLOOD HORSE!
NNEEEEE!!GGGHHHH.
NAJA!!
YOU'RE BLEEDING!
AS I SUSPECTED. BRING HER BACK HERE.
IT WAS AT THE PALACE.
SHE'S OURS.
THAT GIRL IS BEYOND THE SCOPE OF TELENE'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE.
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE BLOOD BUT...
NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, THE VERY FIRST TIME BAMBI AND I PASSED BY ONE ANOTHER.
ON THE ROAD------
I WONDER WHAT THIS STAIN IS?
SWEAT?
OH!
COULD IT BE...?
I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING YET.
WHAT DID YOU DO TO HER?!

!!
THE COLLAPSER !?
BUT MASTER DEIMION, WE WERE ONLY ADVISED OF YOUR COMING!
IT SEEMS THAT MASTER IDOU WILL BE COMING AS WELL.
HMM.
IT SEEMS THAT SOMETHING BIGGER THAN THE BOTH OF US APPROACHES.
I NEED TO SETTLE THIS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!!
THAT GIRL...
...IS A SURVIVOR FROM THE NINTH WORLD- THE ONE THAT WE DESTROYED
AND IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN -
... SHE'S ALSO THE HEIR OF RAGUNAHAAN'S LEGACY.

WHIIIIPP!
CLANG
HEEE!
CLANG
SCATTER
WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE!
GET....
GET TO THE CAR RIAGE
SCATTER
OH, DON'T BE STUPID! JUST GET IN!!
NOOO!
IF I HAVE TO GET ON THE CARRIAGE, THEN I AT LEAST WANT TO GET ON THE BEST ONE..
QUICK, SOMEONE CHANGE THE HORSES OVER NOW!!
CLANG
WHIIIPPP!
KAGAMI!!
OH MY GOD!!
BUT..
STAND BACK!
IT'S DANGEROUS!!
... OR ELSE YOU'LL GET KILLED.
WHIP
YOU TWO BETTER GET BACK AS WELL...
KYAAAA !!
THE RDOSTER SPOKE!!

SLAM SSSH
BIG SISTER
HOW COULD YOU BE SO MEAN? YOU JUST CALLED ME STUPID!
HURRY UP!!
WHAT ON EARTH?
WWWWWWRRRRRR
!!
WWWWWW EEEEEEEE


DAMNIT!!
KYAAAA-AHHHH !!
THE...
...COL-LAPSER!!
!!
OWWWIE!!
SHE HIT ME!!
CRRRRAAAAAAAAAAACCCCCCCCCKKKKKK

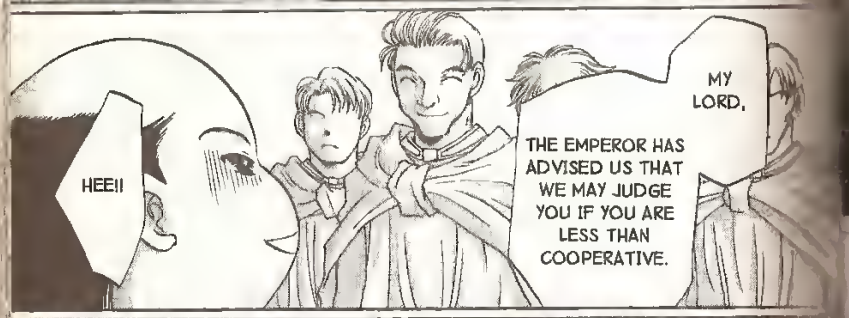

WWWWWW
RRRRRRRR
RRRRRRRRE
PRINCE SEEU!!

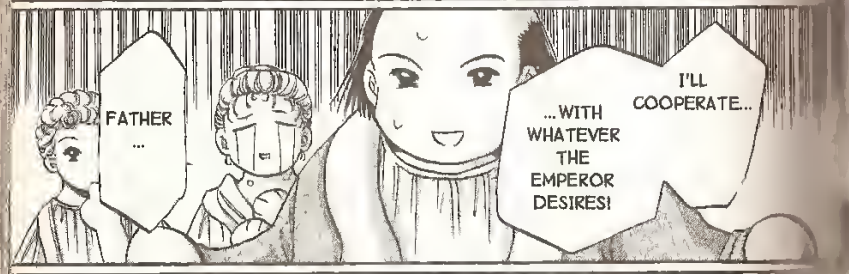
BBOOOMMMMM
!!
WWWHHHHERR
ゴゴゴゴ
...
WAAAA
...
TTTHUUUDDD
MASTER
SEEU...!!
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

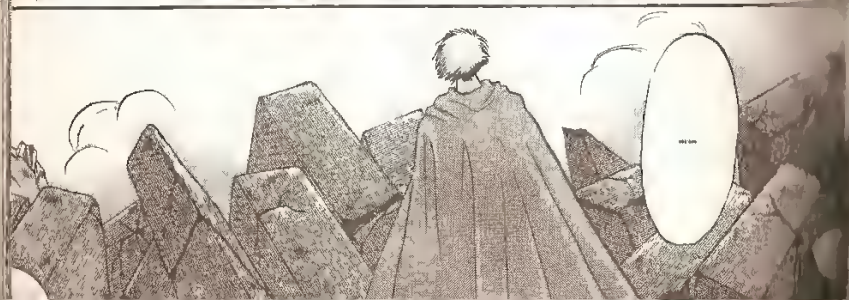
...BRING HER TO ME..
...GOLD..
JUST WAIT A MINUTE, KAGAMI!!
...WAI...
...WAIT..
I...
I WANT TO BRING WASEDA-SAN TO SEE SEEU AGAIN.
PLEASE JUST WAIT A BIT.
WASEDA-SAN AND BAMBI-CHAN ARE...!!
ONE MOMENT PLEASE, SIRE!
WELL, WHAT HAPPENED ?
DID IDOU MAKE IT THERE OR NOT?
I'M QUITE SURE THAT HE MANAGED ONE WAY OR THE OTHER. JUST GET HIM OUT OF THERE!!
I FEAR FOR MASTER IDOU'S SAFETY. IT WAS DESTROYED IN THE MIDST OF HIS TRANSFERENCE.
TELENE'S COLLAPSER IS AN OLDER MODEL...
40 MINUTES ?!
HOWEVER, IT WILL TAKE 40 MINUTES, SIRE.
WE SHALL PREPARE OUR OWN COLLAPSER IMMEDIATELY, SIRE.
AS YOU WISH ..
WORTHLESS FOOL.
THAT'S NOT SOON ENOUGH...

KAGUYA...
!!
WRRRRRRRRRR
RRRRRRR
THERE'S SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO SEE YOU. THERE'S SOMEONE I WANT YOU TO SEE!!
PLEASE!!
PLEASE, WAIT!
WAI..
WWWWWW
RRRRRRRRRRRRRR
WAIT..
PLEASE, WAIT!!
...SEE!!

FIND ALL TRACES OF RAGUNA AND PYRO'S LEGACY!!
I WANT YOU TO SCRUB THAT GIRL'S PAST COMPLETELY.
I DON'T CARE IF IT'S WITHIN THE TELENIAN SPHERE OR NOT. DO WHATEVER YOU MUST TO TAKE CONTROL OF IT!


HEE!!
MY LORD,
THE EMPEROR HAS ADVISED US THAT WE MAY JUDGE YOU IF YOU ARE LESS THAN COOPERATIVE.


FATHER ...
...WITH WHATEVER THE EMPEROR DESIRES!
I'LL COOPERATE...


...

MY...
DEEPEST APOLOGIES, YOUR HIGHNESS...
... HHPM ...

YES, SIRE.
AH, WELL...
DO YOU AT LEAST HAVE THE SILVER-HAIRED ONE?
A GOOD THING, TOO.

THEN I'M SENDING SOME TROOPS ALONG WITH IDOU.
YES, SIRE.
AND THE COLLAPSER? IS IT FUNCTIONAL?

WRRRSSSSHHHHHHHH!
HE COMES AND LEAVES LIKE A DAMNED TYPHOON!
WE'LL MEET AGAIN..
...MAD PRINCE.
THE GIRL AND THE ROOSTER..
BRING THEM TO ME IMMEDIATLY !!
AS YOU COMMAND !!
HMPH ...
I'LL RETAKE MY BRIDE SOON ENOUGH.
FOR NOW, THIS NEW SITUATION MAY PROVE QUITE AMUSING.

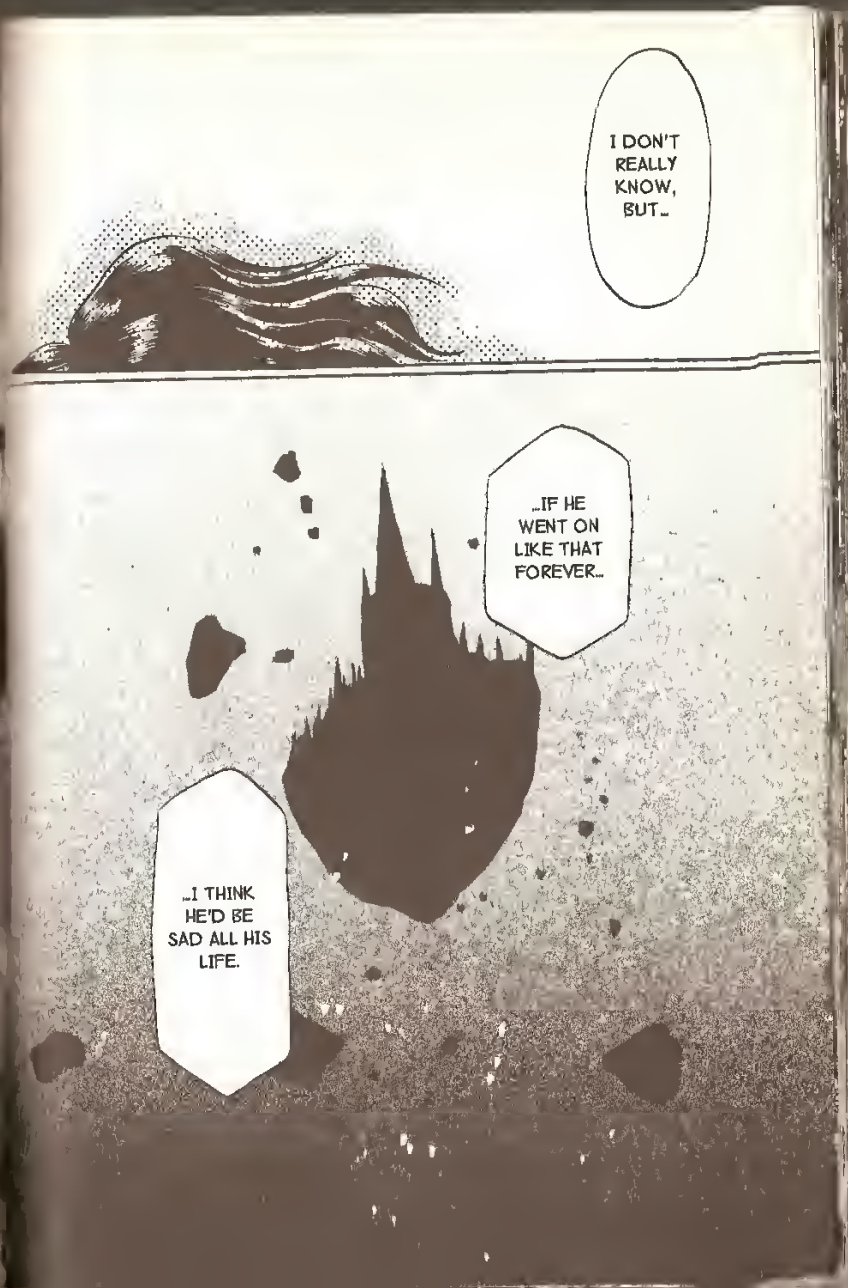
I THINK IT'S HORRIBLE!!
ALL OF A SUDDEN, THEY JUST DISAPPEAR?
I JUST THINK IT'S TOTALLY WRONG!
AFTER FORCING ME HERE...
ARE YOU LISTEN ING?
I'M SO MAD RIGHT NOW!!
DO YOU HEAR ME?
I'M TELLING YOU I'M TOTALLY TICKED OFF, OKAY?!

THIS PLACE ...
...THIS JUST ISN'T A PLACE FOR HUMANS TO LIVE!
BUT...
...THIS IS SEEU'S PALACE ISN'T IT?
HELLO
SEEU! KAGAMI!!
WHERE ARE YOU TWO!?
IT'S THE ONE WASEDA-SAN WAS TELLING ME ABOUT!
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?

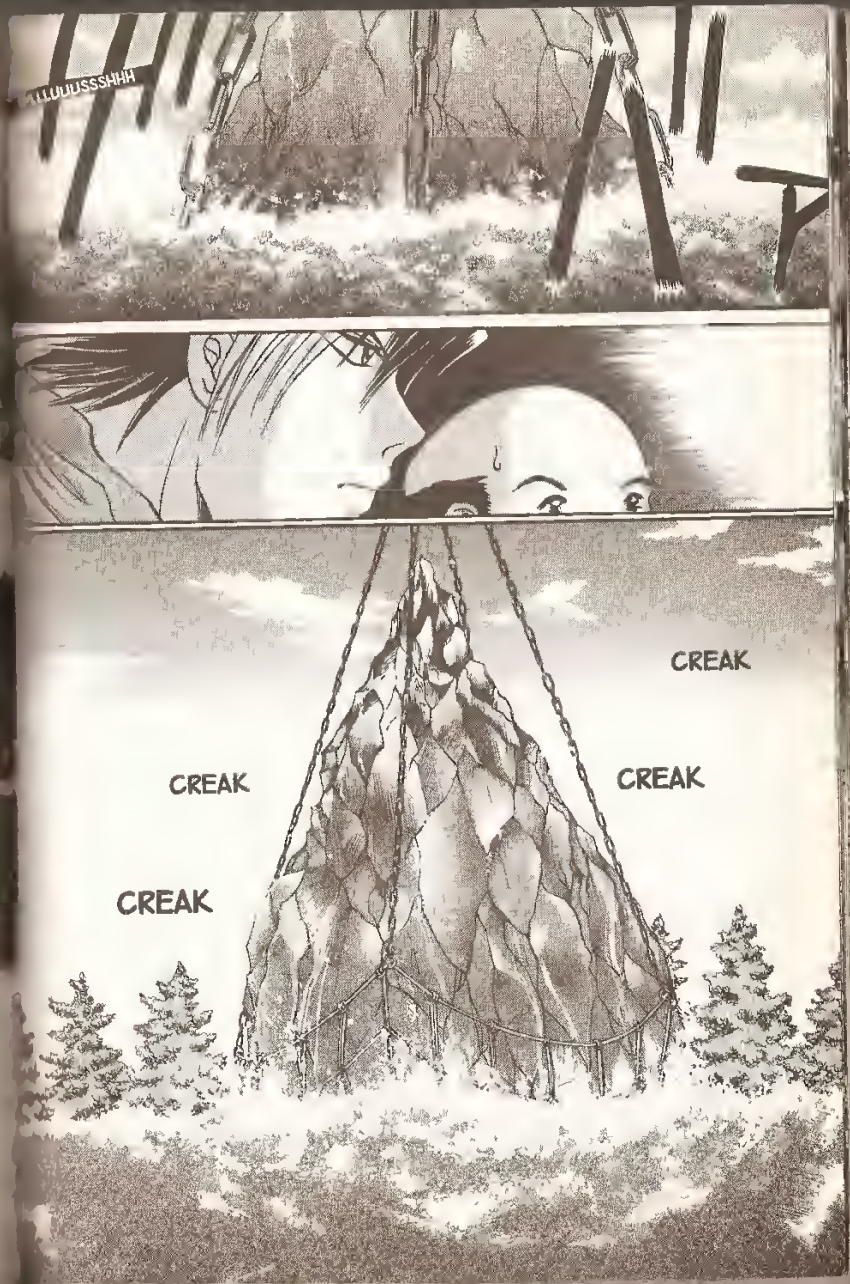
...EVEN SOMEONE WHO'S JUST GONE THROUGH SO MUCH..
HOW CAN HE DO THINGS LIKE THAT?
BUT...
EVEN SOME-ONE WHO'S BEEN HURT...
EVEN THOUGH I COULDN'T HELP BUT THINK ABOUT WASEDA-SAN'S STORY
B...
HOW CAN HE ENDANGER THE LIVES OF SO MANY PEOPLE, WHETHER HE IS AWARE OF IT OR NOT?
STUFF LIKE THAT...
HOW CAN HE OESTROY SOMEONE ELSE'S HOME... ...OR KIONAP SOMEONE?
I JUST DON'T SEE HOW HE CAN GO AROUND DOING STUFF LIKE THAT AS IF IT'S NORMAL.
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT...
SWOON
I'M SO HUNGRY ...
...HE ALWAYS SEEMED LIKE THE TYPE WHO WASN'T ANY GOOD AT LISTENING
AFTER ALL, HE CUT UP MY HOUSE LIKE IT WAS NOTHING.
RAGE
IT FELT LIKE NO MATTER HOW HARO I SCREAMED, NO ONE WOULD REALLY HEAR ME.

IT'S SO COLD!

WE FOUND IT!
THERE IT IS!!
IN THE BASE MENT...
GET RID OF ALL THE RUBBLE!!
IT WILL NOT BE SO EASILY BROKEN.
IF IT IS TRULY WHAT WE SEEK,
WORK YOUR WAY AROUND THE LAKE AND START DESTROYING ANYTHING THAT GETS IN THE WAY!
PULL IT UP!!


I DON'T REALLY KNOW, BUT..
..IF HE WENT ON LIKE THAT FOREVER..
..I THINK HE'D BE SAD ALL HIS LIFE.

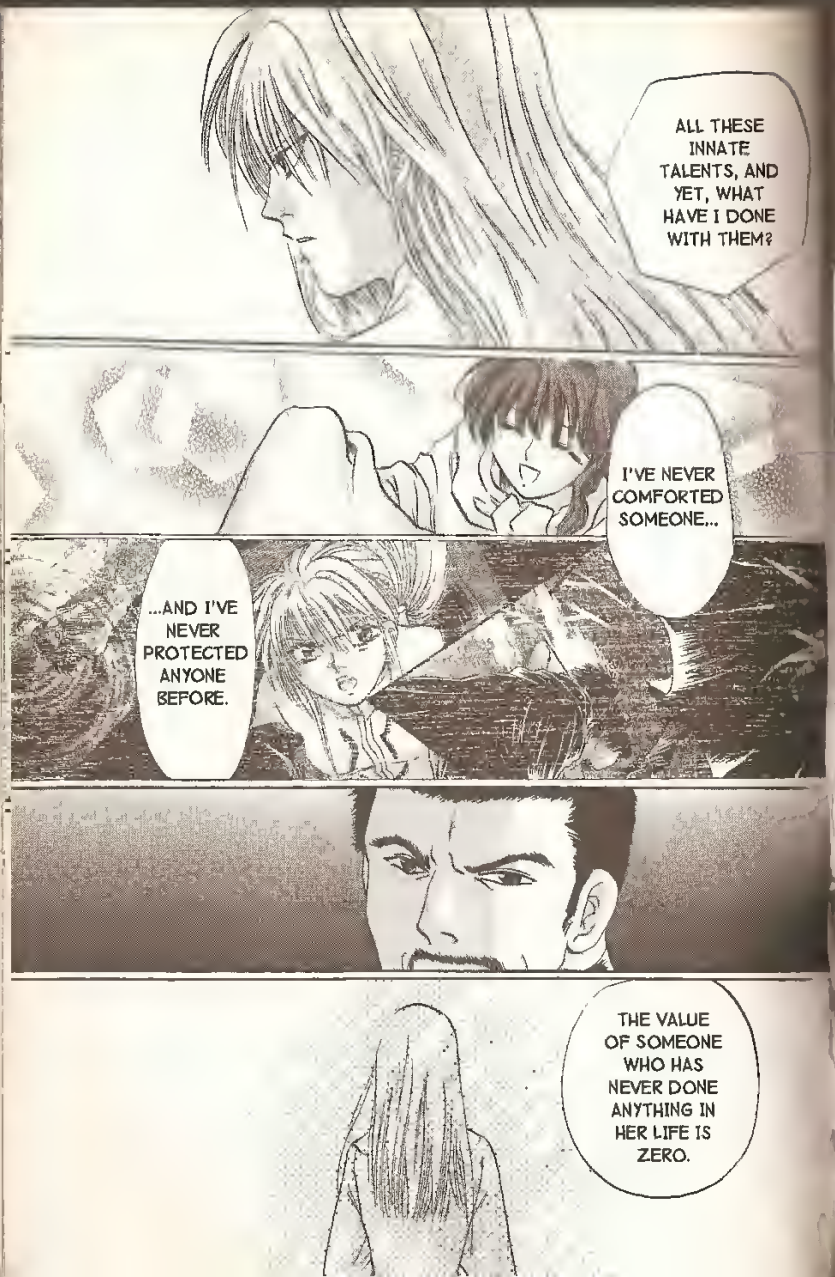
RAGUNAHAAN.
WE'VE FOUND YOU...
IT'S ...
A CORPSE!?
AND...
NOW AT LEAST MY NECK'S SAFE.
PHEW
I'M GLAD WE DID!


...LLUUUSSSHHH
CREAK
CREAK
CREAK
CREAK

WA HA HA HA HA.
WA HA HA HA HA HA HA.
OH, STUBBORN ONE..
...WHAT DO YOU THINK OF OUR NEW LOVER?
ISN'T SHE BEAUTIFUL? AND STUNNING?
SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO LIKE DRESSES VERY MUCH, THOUGH
WHO SAID I WAS YOUR LOVE..?
BY THE WAY, DID YOU KNOW THAT WE ARE NOT ABLE TO ANSWER EVEN ONE OF THOSE QUESTIONS ?
SO? DOESN'T IT PLEASE YOU TO KNOW THAT YOU ARE SMARTER THAN THE EMPEROR?
NOT REALLY.
SHE'S SO INTELLI-GENT.
I HAD HER TAKE A FEW TESTS FOR ME AND SHE DID QUITE WELL.
HE IS IN SUCH A GLORIOUS MOOD ALL DAY AND NIGHT...
...AND IT SEEMS THAT HE HAS EVEN PARDONED MASTER DEIMION FOR A FAILED ASSIGN MENT.
HAVE YOU HEARD THE RUMORS?
ABOUT THE EMPEROR AND HIS FASCINATION FOR THAT YOUNG LITTLE THING? I SURE HAVE!

HE MUST WANT TO SHOW OFF HIS NEW FAV-ORITE.
I HEARD THAT MASTER IDOU WAS CALLED UPON TODAY, AS WELL.
I WONDER WHO THAT GIRL IS, I KNOW FOR SURE THAT SHE IS NOT HIS BRIDE-TO-BE.
WHAT COULD POSSIBLY BE GOING ON? IT'S UNLIKE THE EMPEROR TO FANCY SUCH A LITTLE GIRL...
..MUCH LESS ISSUE A PARDON!

...PYRO'S VOICE.
WHY DON'T YOU LISTEN FOR...
IT REACTED TO THAT BEAROED MAN OVER THERE. AND HAS BEEN EXTRA LOUD LATELY
...IT'S IN THAT TOWER.
THE DEEPEST ROW, SECOND FROM THE RIGHT...
BAMVIVIRIE, WE TRULY DESPISE THOSE OF THE NINTH WORLD..
...THAT IS WHY WE EXTERM-INATED THEM.
BRUSH
I MOVE IT 50 TIMES A DAY, AND STILL SHE IS ABLE TO PINPOINT ITS EXACT LOCATION EACH AND EVERY TIME..
IS SHE NOT SPLENDID?
AND, MORE THAN THAT, SHE POSSESSES SUCH A WONDROUS LITTLE TALENT.
THAT'S RIGHT!
IF I MAY BE SO BOLD, MY LORD —
SHE CARRIES THE BLOOD OF THE NINTH WORLD IN HER VEINS, DOESN'T SHE?
COME NOW, LITTLE BAMVIVIRIE, WHY DON'T YOU MAKE A GUESS?
THAT'S RIGHT!!
TALENT?
THE SECRET LOCATION IS A DIFFERENT PLACE THAN BEFORE.
...IS PYRO HIDDEN?
PRAY TELL, IN WHICH OF THOSE TOWERS VISIBLE FROM THIS WINDOW..


ALL THESE INNATE TALENTS, AND YET, WHAT HAVE I DONE WITH THEM?
I'VE NEVER COMFORTED SOMEONE...
...AND I'VE NEVER PROTECTED ANYONE BEFORE.
THE VALUE OF SOMEONE WHO HAS NEVER DONE ANYTHING IN HER LIFE IS ZERO.

YANK
I HAVE NO WORTH.
STOP IT!
YOU JUST DON'T KNOW YOUR WORTH YET.
YOU WILL BE ABLE TO ANSWER OUR QUESTION... AN ANSWER WE THOUGHT WAS ETERNALLY LOST TO US.
BUT WHEN WE THINK OF YOUR WORTH, WE CANNOT HELP BUT TREMBLE WITH DELIGHT.
FURTHERMORE, I DON'T APPRECIATE YOU JUDGING ME BY YOUR HISTORY OR YOUR VALUES.
AND I KNOW I HAVE NO WORTH.
ACTUALLY, I DO..
NONE OF THOSE THINGS GIVES ME ANY VALUE WHATSOEVER.
OR WHETHER OR NOT I CAN HEAR THE VOICE OF THE LIVING WEAPON.
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW BEAUTIFUL I MAY BE ON THE OUTSIDE OR HOW BRIGHT I MIGHT BE IN SCHOLARLY VENTURES..

I BEG YOUR PARDON
I'D HEARD YOU TWO WERE NOT ON THE BEST OF TERMS.
YOUR FATHER AND THE EMPEROR WERE NOT ON THE BEST OF TERMS EITHER, TO SAY THE LEAST.
BUT THAT MEANS NOTHING NOW.
I'M THE ONE WHO TOOK THE EMPEROR'S EYE, AFTER ALL...
... SARITA ...
COME HERE.
LADY BAMVIVIRIE.
TAP
HOWEVER, I MUST ADVISE YOU THAT THE EMPEROR'S DELIGHT WITH YOU IS GENUINE.
I UNDERSTAND, MY LADY, THAT YOU MAY REGARD ME WITH DISDAIN FOR REASONS BEYOND MY CONTROL...

YET, EVEN AFTER HE WAS CHOSEN BY PYRO, HE CHOSE ONLY TO WITHDRAW FROM THE WORLD FURTHER. THAT WAS THE TYPE OF MAN HE WAS.
...AND HAD ALL THE TALENT TO ONE DAY BECOME KING.
HE WAS BORN OF THE MOST NOBLE BLOOD OF THE NINTH WORLD..
...IS BECAUSE THEY ARE THE ONES WHO KILLED RAGUNA
THE REASON HE IS SO MERCILESS TOWARD THE PEOPLE OF THE NINTH WORLD.
...JUST BETWEEN THE TWO OF US, LET ME USE HIS FORMER NAME.
KURA...
BUT RAGUNA'S ANSWER WAS FOREVER LOST TO THE PAST.
...AND I RESPONDED TO THE QUESTION.
KURA ONCE ASKED A CERTAIN QUESTION OF US..

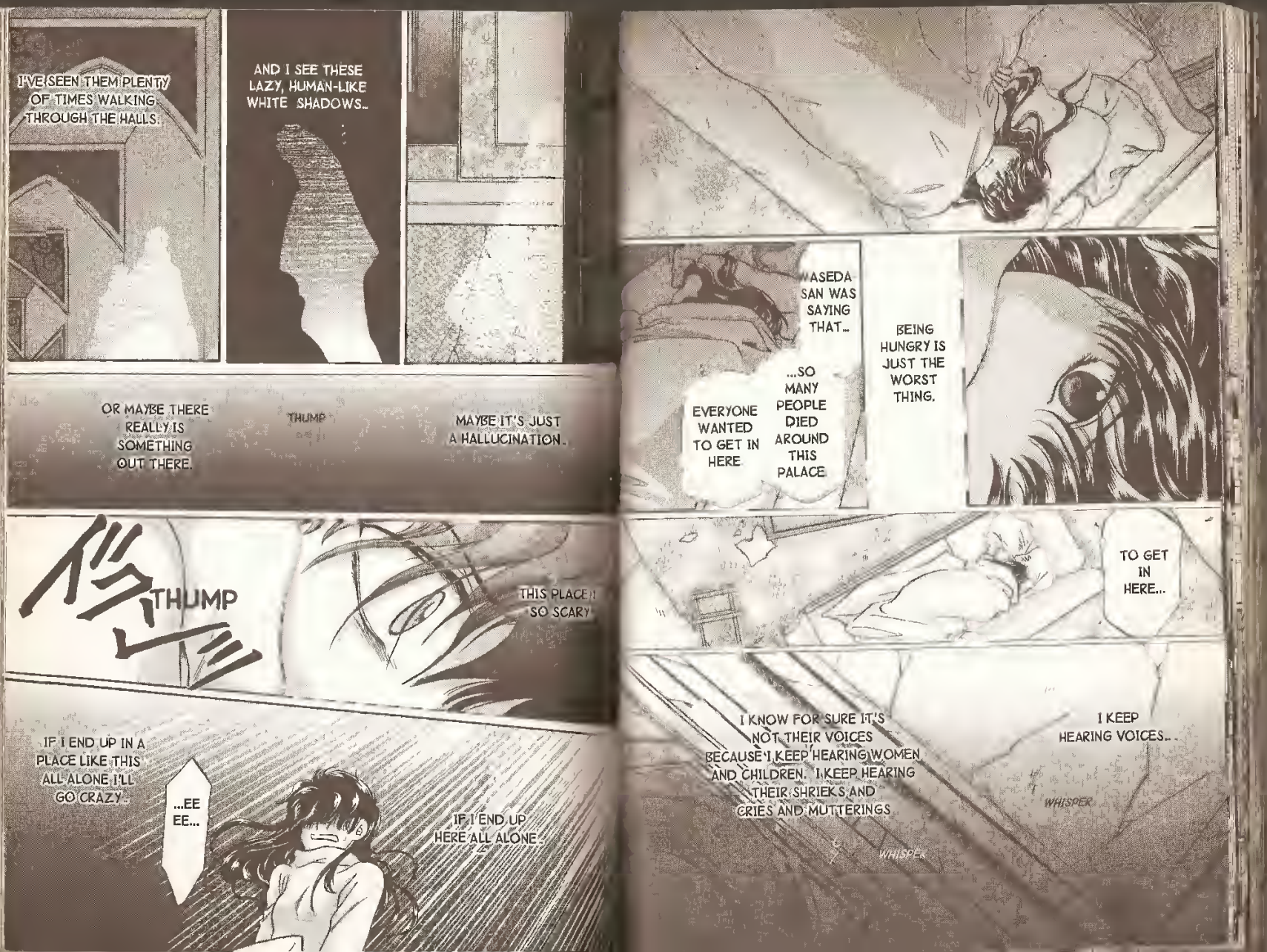
WHICH, BY THE EMPEROR'S COMMAND, WERE SLOWLY THAWED OUT. HOWEVER...
THESE EGGS WERE FROZEN BY THE NINTH WORLD'S SPECIAL PROCESS..
THIRTEEN YEARS AGO, AS GEO WORKED TO CLEANSE ALL TRACES OF THE NINTH WORLD'S REFUGEES AND REMNANTS FROM ITS EXISTENCE, THEY OBTAINED A NUMBER OF THE FERTILIZED EGGS THAT THESE REFUGEES CARRIED WITH THEM.
THERE IS SOMEONE I MUST INTRODUCE YOU TO.
IDOU, WHO IS THIS PERSON?
IT'S YOUR SISTER, SARITA.
THIS GIRL IS UNFORTUNATELY THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF SUCH ACTIONS.
RAGU-NAHAAN LIVED A CLERIC'S LIFE.

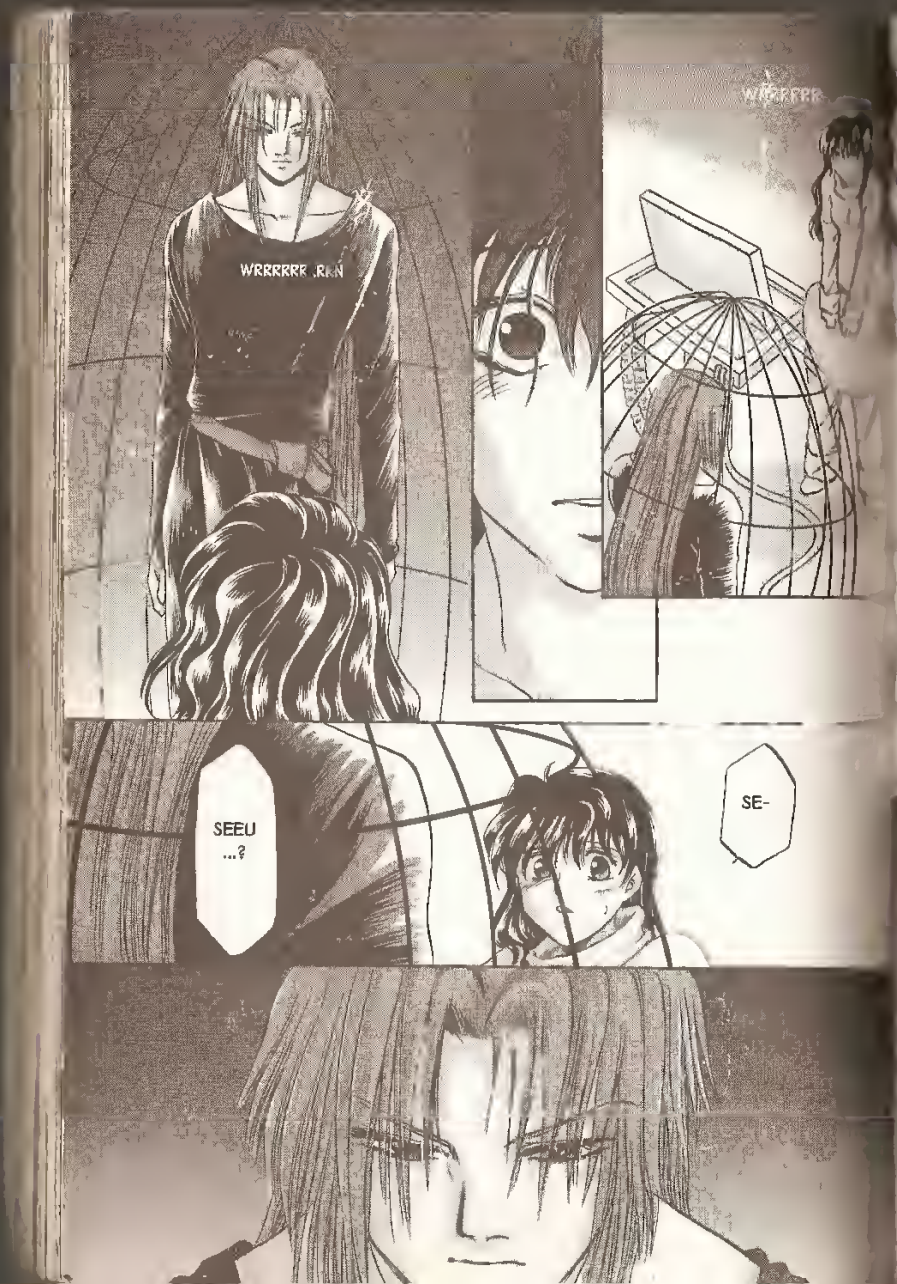
YOU WOULD NEVER RESTORE HIS HEART.
AND BECAUSE YOU KNOW THAT, PYRO..
I'LL REFRAIN FROM BREAKING THIS ICE SIMPLY TO REAFFIRM THAT.
KNOWING THAT YOU'LL NEVER RETURN,
EVEN THOUGH YOU COMMAND FLAMES WHICH DEFY ALL ICE..
YOU REMAIN TRAPPED IN THERE, ETERNALLY.
ARE YOU LAUGH-ING?
YOU WERE ALWAYS A SERIOUS BASTARD, AFTER ALL.
NO..
BUT YOU WOULDN'T LAUGH, WOULD YOU?
MY LORD!
TO THIS DAY, KURA MOURNS SUCH LOSS.
THE RESULTS HAVE COME BACK, SIRE. WHILE THERE IS NO REPORTED DAMAGE TO THE CELLS OR ANYTHING ELSE..
YES, SIRE.
YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH HERE. LEAVE.
.. HIS HEART IS MISSING, ISN'T IT?
NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU MEND YOUR MASTER'S BODY..
EH, PYRO?
WHAT A SAD STORY..
...MAY NEVER BE RECALLED.
...A SOUL THAT HAS ALREADY LEFT..

し—ん
SILENCE
し—ん
し—ん
WHERE ARE YOU TWO!!??
——IT'S VERY COLD INSIDE THE PALACE.
I GOT THESE CLOTHES FROM AROUND THERE SOMEWHERE.
WELL... YOU SEE...
AH...
AAAAHHHH...
BUT, WHAT'S WORSE, I FACE A MUCH MORE PRESSING, MUCH MORE TREMENDOUS PROBLEM.
ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?!

SINCE I CAME TO THIS PALACE,
IT'S ALREADY BEEN FIVE WHOLE DAYS...
I TRIED MY HARDEST TO SEARCH ALL OVER THE PLACE.
GYYYYAAAAHHH!!
AND WHILE I HAVE MANAGED TO FIND ALL THESE NON-WORKING COPIES OF KAGAMI...
IT JUST CAN'T BE GOOD FOR MY HEART.....
IT...
ACK...
I SAW THOSE THINGS AGAIN.....
I HAVE YET TO LOCATE EITHER SEEU OR KAGAMI.

AND MY SKIN FEELS GREAT- I MUST BE GETTING THE PERFECT NOURISHMENT?
BUT THE THING IS, EVEN THOUGH I'M ONLY EATING SOUP, I HAVEN'T LOST ANY WEIGHT YET AT ALL
I MEAN, HE JUST DOESN'T SEEM LIKE HE WOULD CARE MUCH ABOUT EATING. I CAN'T HELP BUT IMAGINE THAT IF HE HAD BEEN BORN IN TOKYO, HE'D PROBABLY BE THE TYPE TO GET BY WITH CALORIE MATES ALL THE TIME AND BE HAPPY WITH IT.
INCIDENTALLY, I'M ALSO PRETTY CONFIDENT THAT SEEU GOT BY WITH ONLY THIS AS WELL. AFTER ALL, HE LOOKS LIKE HE HAS A SMALL STOMACH.
CALORIE MATES PROTEIN BAR THAT DIETERS OFTEN EAT IN JAPAN
I'M SO HUNGRY...
SIIGHHHH
I CAN'T EVEN BRING MYSELF TO CLEAN ANYMORE.
I GUESS I'LL JUST SLEEP HERE TONIGHT
...I GIVE UP...
BEING HUNGRY IS PROBABLY ONE OF THE WORST THINGS THAT COULD HAPPEN TO A PERSON.
AT ANY RATE, I'VE SEARCHED THIS PALACE HIGH AND LOW, AND THE ONLY THING EDIBLE IS THIS SOUP!!
SLURP
OOOOHH!!
FOUR TIMES EVERY DAY, FOOD RAISES UP FROM THE FLOOR AND TO THE SURFACE, JUST LIKE THIS.
THIS SEEMS TO BE A MAGICAL KITCHEN COUNTER.
AAAH!! THERE'S SOUP THERE AGAIN...
I MEAN, THERE'S ONLY SOUP AGAIN ..!!
IT SEEMS A LITTLE ODD THAT THE ONLY THING THAT COMES OUT IS SOUP.
JUDGING FROM THE DIFFERENT STYLES AND AMOUNTS OF PLATES, YOU'D THINK THAT THE MENU WOULD BE A LITTLE MORE VARIED..
THAT IN ITSELF IS PRETTY NEAT!
LET'S SAY THAT SOMETHING HAPPENED AND THE SOUP STOPPED APPEARING- THEN I'D SURELY STARVE TO DEATH.
...
NOW, DELVING EVEN FURTHER INTO THIS PROBLEM OF MINE MAKES ME FEEL REALLY SAD.


I'VE SEEN THEM PLENTY OF TIMES WALKING THROUGH THE HALLS.
AND I SEE THESE LAZY, HUMAN-LIKE WHITE SHADOWS..
OR MAYBE THERE REALLY IS SOMETHING OUT THERE.
THUMP
MAYBE IT'S JUST A HALLUCINATION.
THUMP
THIS PLACE IS SO SCARY
IF I END UP IN A PLACE LIKE THIS ALL ALONE, I'LL GO CRAZY.
...EE EE...
IF I END UP HERE ALL ALONE...
WASEDA SAN WAS SAYING THAT...
EVERYONE WANTED TO GET IN HERE
...SO MANY PEOPLE DIED AROUND THIS PALACE
BEING HUNGRY IS JUST THE WORST THING.
TO GET IN HERE...
I KNOW FOR SURE IT'S NOT THEIR VOICES BECAUSE I KEEP HEARING WOMEN AND CHILDREN. I KEEP HEARING THEIR SHRIEKS AND CRIES AND MUTTERINGS
WHISPER
I KEEP HEARING VOICES...
WHISPER


WRRRRRR..RRR
WHEEEEE
SEEU ...?
SE-

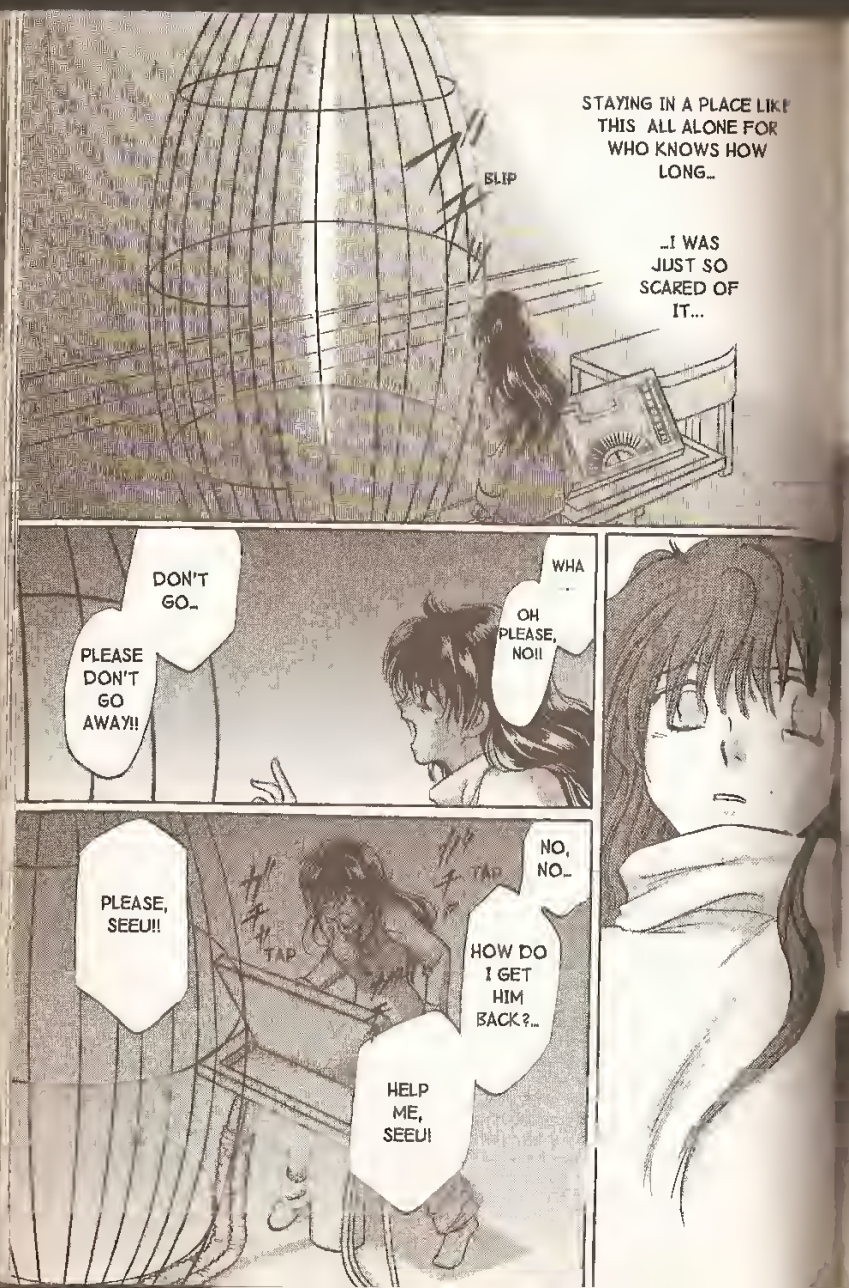
JUST LET ME OUT OF HERE...
LET ME OUT!!
WHAP
JUST PLEASE STOP IT!!
NOOO-OOO!
IT'S NOT ANYTHING LIKE WHAT I HEARD ABOUT SEEU'S CHILDHOOD, BUT..
IF YOU DON'T..
BLIP
IF YOU DON'T SCREAM, OR JUST ACT OUT A LITTLE.. WHAP
BLIP?
A SWITCH? WHAT IS THIS THING? A DESK?
PI PI
PI PI
PI PI
PI PI
PI PI

IT'S ALIVE... I MEAN... IT'S ALIVE!
IT DIDN'T MOVE AT ALL, SO I THOUGHT IT WAS SOME KIND OF PICTURE, BUT...
KYAAAAH!! IT TALKED!
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
KYAAAA-AAHHH-HHHH!!
SEEU... WAIT...
NYUU
BUT I'M NOT SURPRISED AT ALL! BECAUSE I SAW IT IN A MOVIE AND ALL.
OH... I UNDER-STAND. IT'S A HOLOGRAM, RIGHT!?
EH...URRRM..... SO... URRM... WHAT IS THIS.....??
TURN
YOU.. JUST WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY IMPRISONING ME IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?
WHAT DO I WANT? HOW DARE YOU!!
YOU'RE ... YOU'RE THE REASON THIS ALL BEGAN FOR ME, AFTER ALL.
LET ME GO...OR AT LEAST TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON.

THAT WAS MY PLAN.
I WANTED TO PROTECT YOU FROM THE SEVENTH WORLD...AND THE OTHER WORLDS...AND FROM ANY THAT SEEK THEIR OWN DESTRUCTION.
HUH?
AND I AM... PROTECTING YOU.
THE PLAN IS BEING CARRIED OUT EVEN NOW...
AND THAT IS WHY I BROUGHT YOU HERE.

BECAUSE YOU...
BECAUSE YOU TOOK ME AWAY FROM MY HOME!
KYAAAAH!!
IT WAS TO PROTECT YOU.
I JUST HAVE TO TELL YOU WHY, RIGHT?

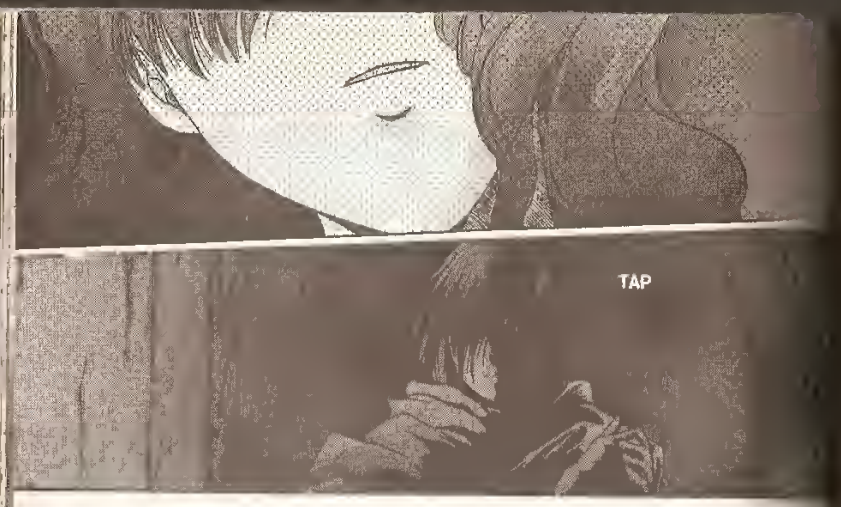
HE'S ALWAYS LIVED LIKE THIS HERE.
I JUST DON'T CARE!!
I DON'T CARE!
WITHOUT ANYONE ELSE TO INTERACT WITH...
I JUST COULDN'T LIVE IF THERE WAS NO ONE ELSE AROUND ME TO TOUCH OR BE WITH.
BECAUSE I'M NOTHING LIKE YOU...!!
BECAUSE...
I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT SOMEONE PETTING MY HEAD OR HOLDING MY HAND.
YOU'RE NOT PROTECTING ME AT ALL. HOW CAN YOU EVEN SAY THAT?
LEAVING ME HERE IN THIS PLACE ALL BY MYSELF...
...WITH ONLY SOUP TO DRINK!!
NO, YOU'RE NOT!!
FOR FIVE WHOLE DAYS, YOU LEFT ME ALONE.
...THIS PERSON ALWAYS HAD THIS.
THIS PERSON...
...FOR FIVE WHOLE DAYS!
BUT...
YOU NEVER SPOKE TO ME OR TOLD ME ANYTHING...
YOU NEVER EVEN SHOWED ME YOU WERE HERE...

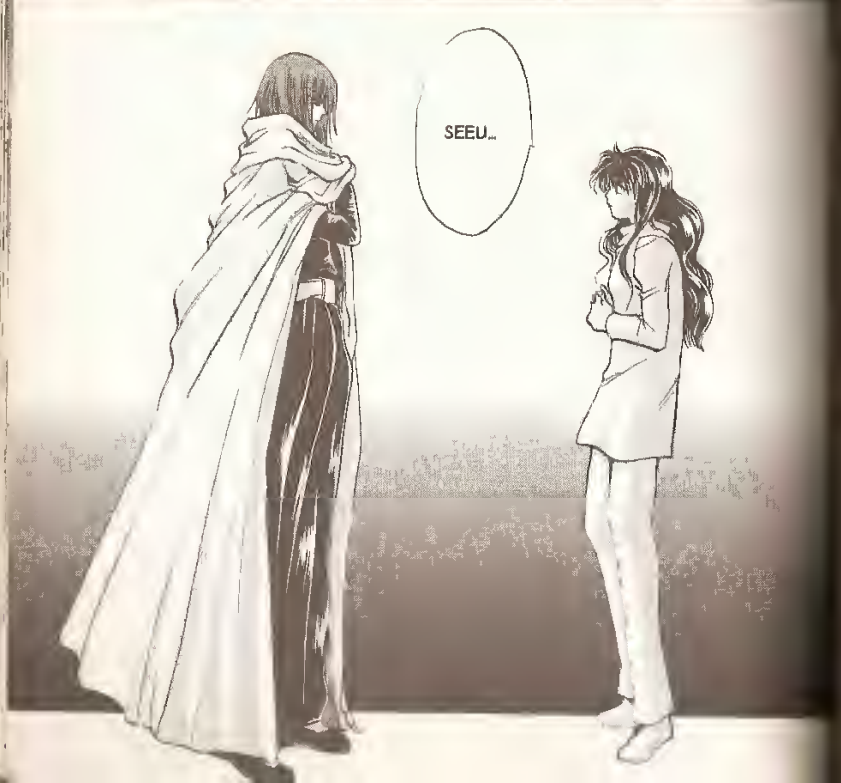

BLIP
STAYING IN A PLACE LIKE THIS ALL ALONE FOR WHO KNOWS HOW LONG...
...I WAS JUST SO SCARED OF IT...
DON'T GO...
PLEASE DON'T GO AWAY!!
WHA...
OH PLEASE, NO!!
PLEASE, SEE!!
TAP
TAP
NO, NO...
HOW DO I GET HIM BACK?...
HELP ME, SEE!!

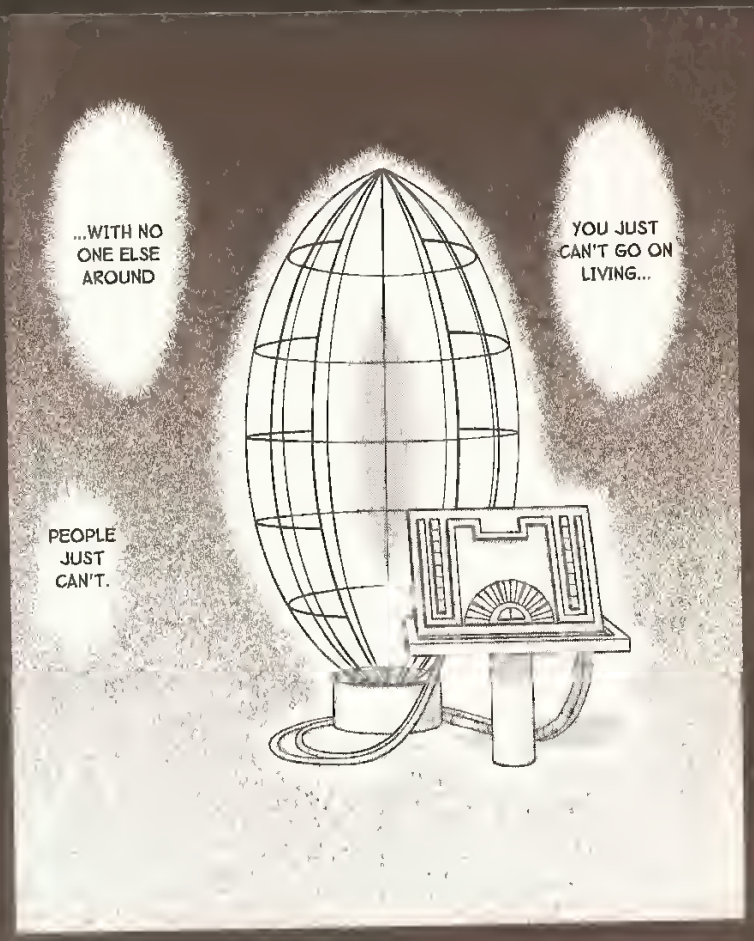
SOMEONE WHO COULD NEVER GIVE ME THAT WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO PROTECT ME!!
I NEED THAT JUST LIKE I NEED FOOD OR OXYGEN.
IT WAS CRUEL, BUT...
I KNEW IT WAS CRUEL.
I KNEW THAT SAYING THESE THINGS TO HIM WAS CRUEL.
I WAS SO SCARED.
PLEASE UNDERSTAND.

TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP TAP TAP

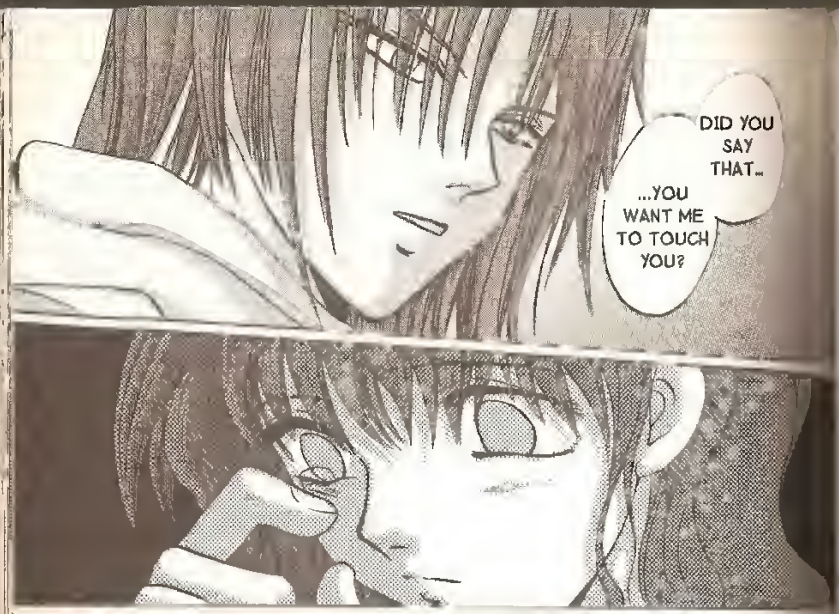
SEEU, YOU'RE SUCH A MEAN, STUPID DUMMY!!
DUMMY...!!
HOW DARE YOU SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT, YOU MEAN-!!
YOU'RE NOT PROTECTING ME..
YOU'RE NOT PROTECTING ME AT ALL.
TAP
TAP
TAP
CRRRRRRRRREEEEEAAAK.


TAP


SEEU...


...WITH NO ONE ELSE AROUND
YOU JUST CAN'T GO ON LIVING...
PEOPLE JUST CAN'T.

TAP



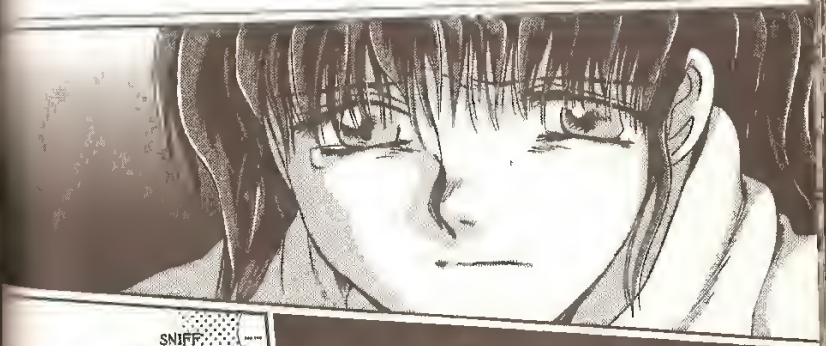
I DON'T REALLY KNOW IF HAVING SO MANY OF ME AROUND LIKE THAT WOULD GENUINELY MAKE ME HAPPY OR NOT, BUT...

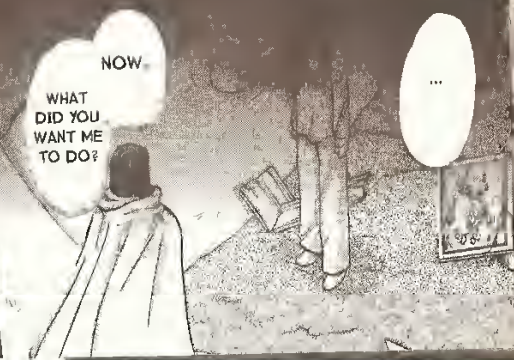
IF I WAS A PARAMECIUM, THEN I WOULD HAVE BEEN FINE.

I COULD DIVIDE MYSELF UP INTO MORE OF ME AS MUCH AS I WANTED.

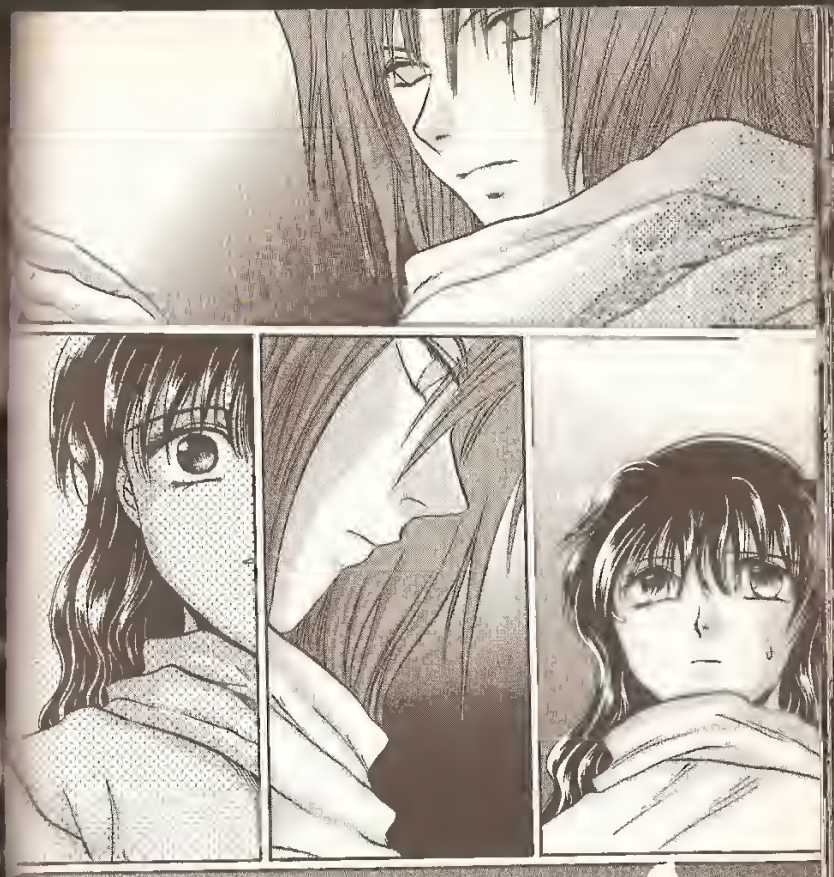
...BECAUSE HUMANS CAN'T DIVIDE UP LIKE PARAMECIUM, I THINK WE'RE LONELIER THAN THEY ARE.

PARAMECIUM: ANY OF VARIOUS FRESHWATER CILIATE PROTOZOANS OF THE GENUS *PARAMECIUM*, USUALLY OVAL AND HAVING AN ORAL GROOVE FOR FEEDING





I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING WRONG.
THERE'S NO REASON FOR ME TO BACK DOWN
I'M TELLIN' YA TO GE-----T AWAY, BUDDY.
THAT'S RIGHT.
I THINK
SHATTER
MAYBE I DID SAY THOSE THINGS!!
WELL ...
WHAT I MEANT WAS ...
I, URMM...
...
WE...
WELL, WHAT IF I MEANT WHAT I SAID, HUH!?
ARE YOU GOING TO...TO PET MY HEAD OR SOMETHING? ARE YOU!?
...
TH...THAT'S KINDA LIKE...GIVING AN EXAMPLE OR...
MAYBE SPUR OF THE MOMENT.
YOU SEE ...

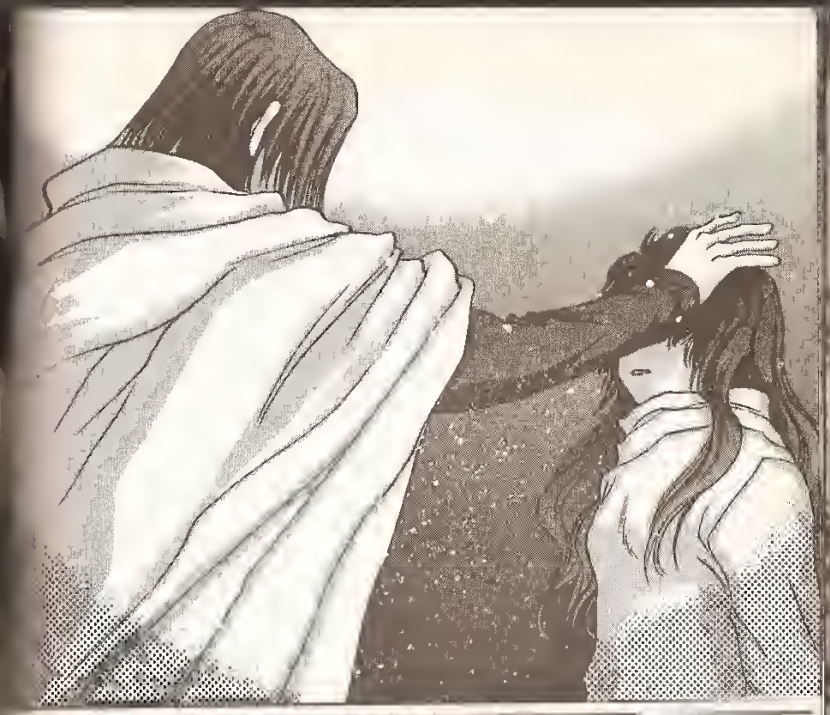


Fuuuuuuuuuuuu

..THE PRINCE HAD GROWN UP WITHOUT CONTACT FROM ANY OTHER BEING..

SINCE THE DAY HE WAS BORN..

...AND WHEN I FELT THAT...



A SPACE BARELY..

A FEW MILLIMETERS AWAY..

I COULD FEEL ALL THE EFFORT AND ALL THE CONFLICT COURSE THROUGH HIS BODY IN HIS ATTEMPT TO SHORTEN THE DISTANCE BETWEEN US.

HIS EXPRESSION HADN'T CHANGED IN THE SLIGHTEST BUT..

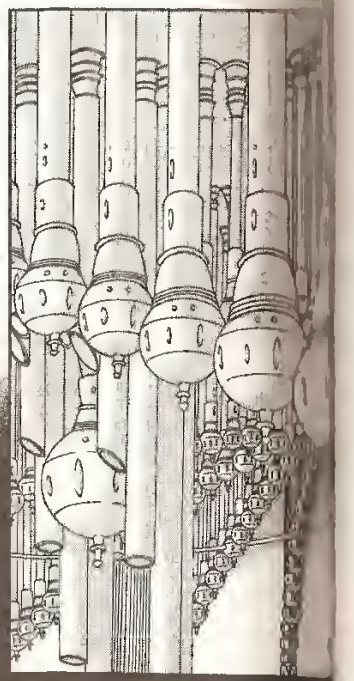
I DON'T KNOW WHY...

...FOR ALMOST 30 MINUTES...

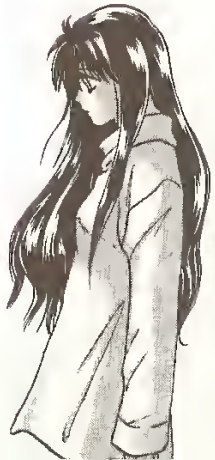
I NEVER TOLD HIM, "I'M SORRY. IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW."

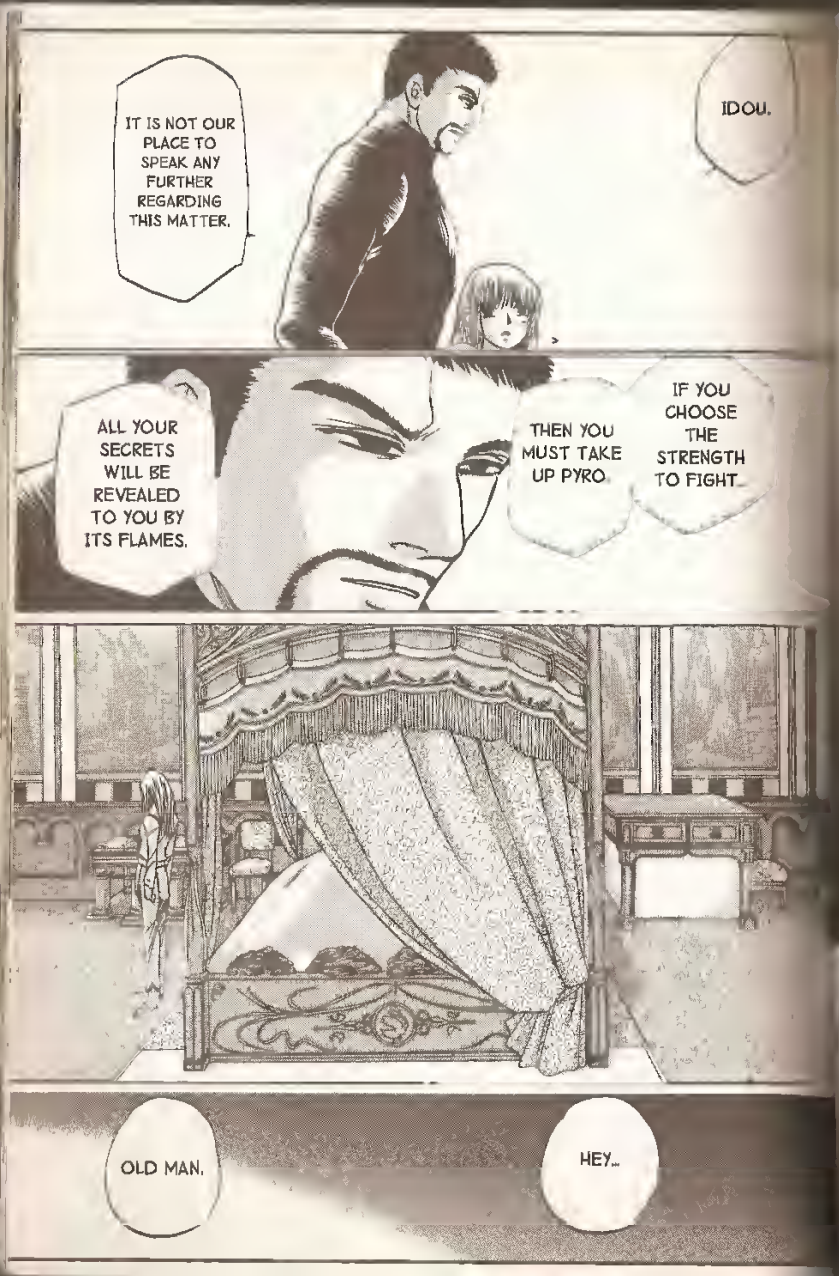
WHY?

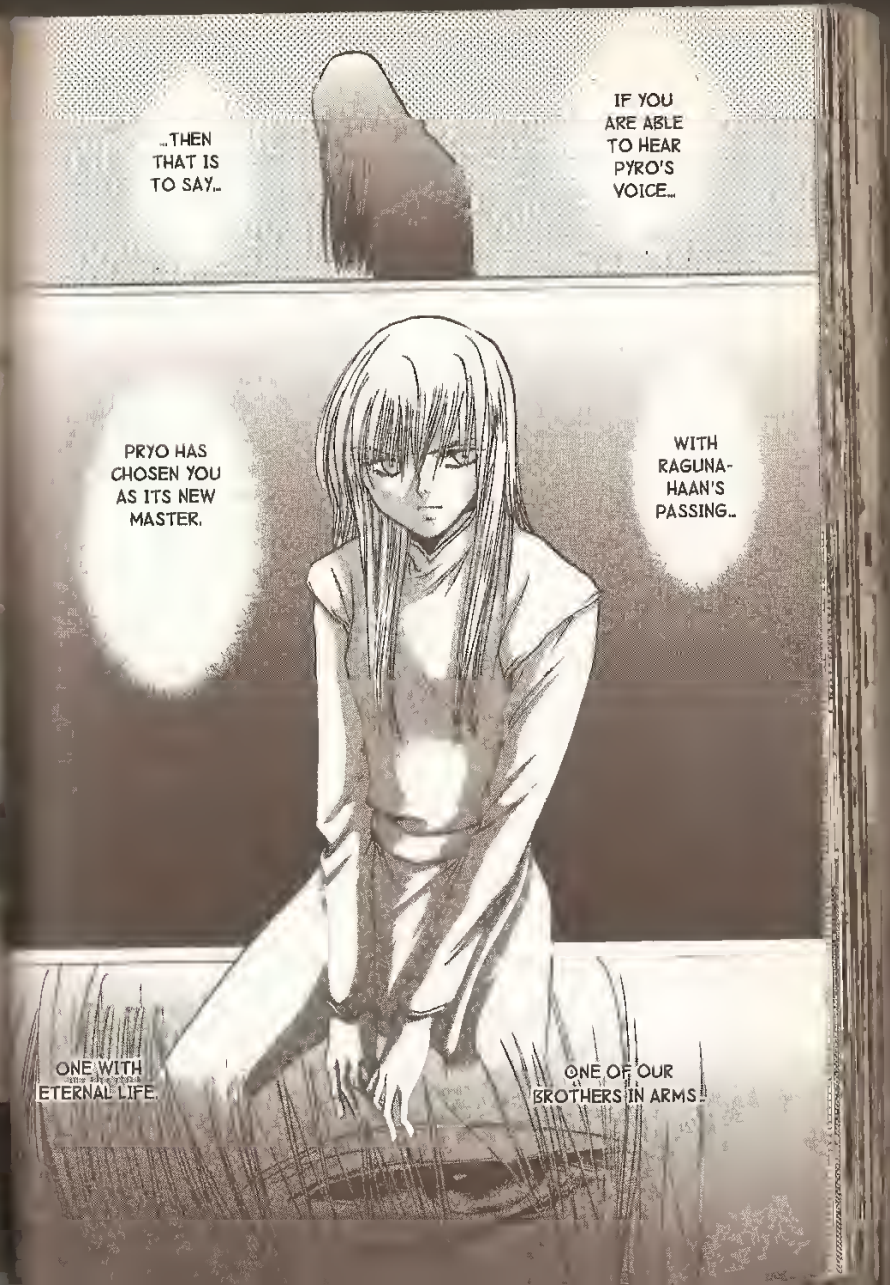
I WON-
DER
WHY
?



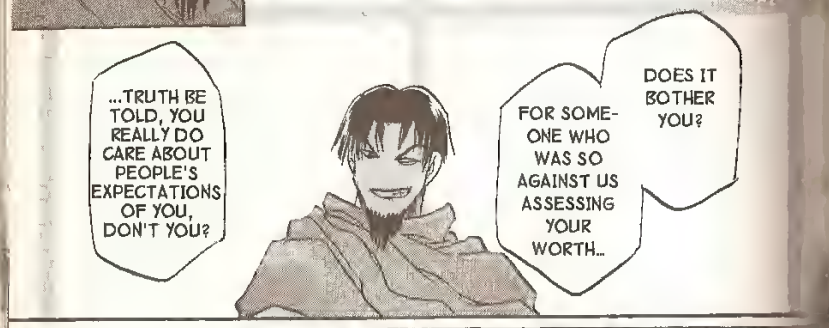
...COULD
IT BE
THAT I WAS
WAITING
FOR
SOMETHING?

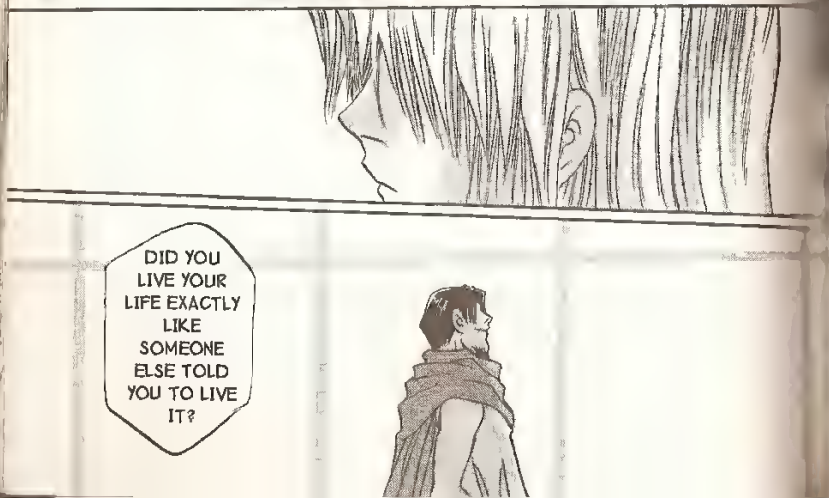



IT IS NOT OUR PLACE TO SPEAK ANY FURTHER REGARDING THIS MATTER.
IDOU.
ALL YOUR SECRETS WILL BE REVEALED TO YOU BY ITS FLAMES.
THEN YOU MUST TAKE UP PYRO.
IF YOU CHOOSE THE STRENGTH TO FIGHT..
OLD MAN.
HEY..

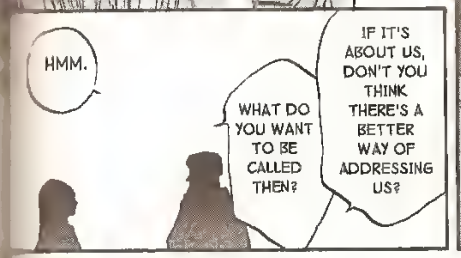

..THEN THAT IS TO SAY..
IF YOU ARE ABLE TO HEAR PYRO'S VOICE..
PRYO HAS CHOSEN YOU AS ITS NEW MASTER.
WITH RAGUNA-HAAN'S PASSING..
ONE WITH ETERNAL LIFE.
ONE OF OUR BROTHERS IN ARMS..

NOW, LET'S SAY THAT YOU THOUGHT I WAS PYRO'S MASTER.
WHAT WOULD YOU EXPECT OUT OF ME?
SIGH
RIGHT.

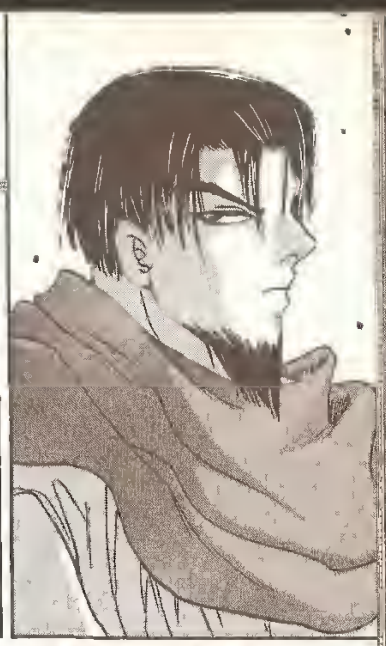

...TRUTH BE TOLD, YOU REALLY DO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS OF YOU, DON'T YOU?
FOR SOME-ONE WHO WAS SO AGAINST US ASSESSING YOUR WORTH..
DOES IT BOTHER YOU?


DID YOU LIVE YOUR LIFE EXACTLY LIKE SOMEONE ELSE TOLD YOU TO LIVE IT?

OF COURSE IT'S ABOUT YOU.
ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT US?

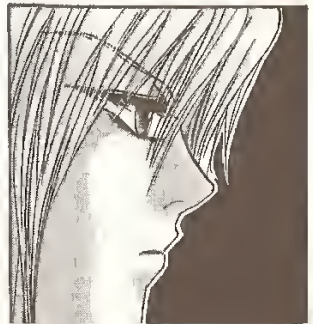

HMM.
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE CALLED THEN?
IF IT'S ABOUT US, DON'T YOU THINK THERE'S A BETTER WAY OF ADDRESSING US?

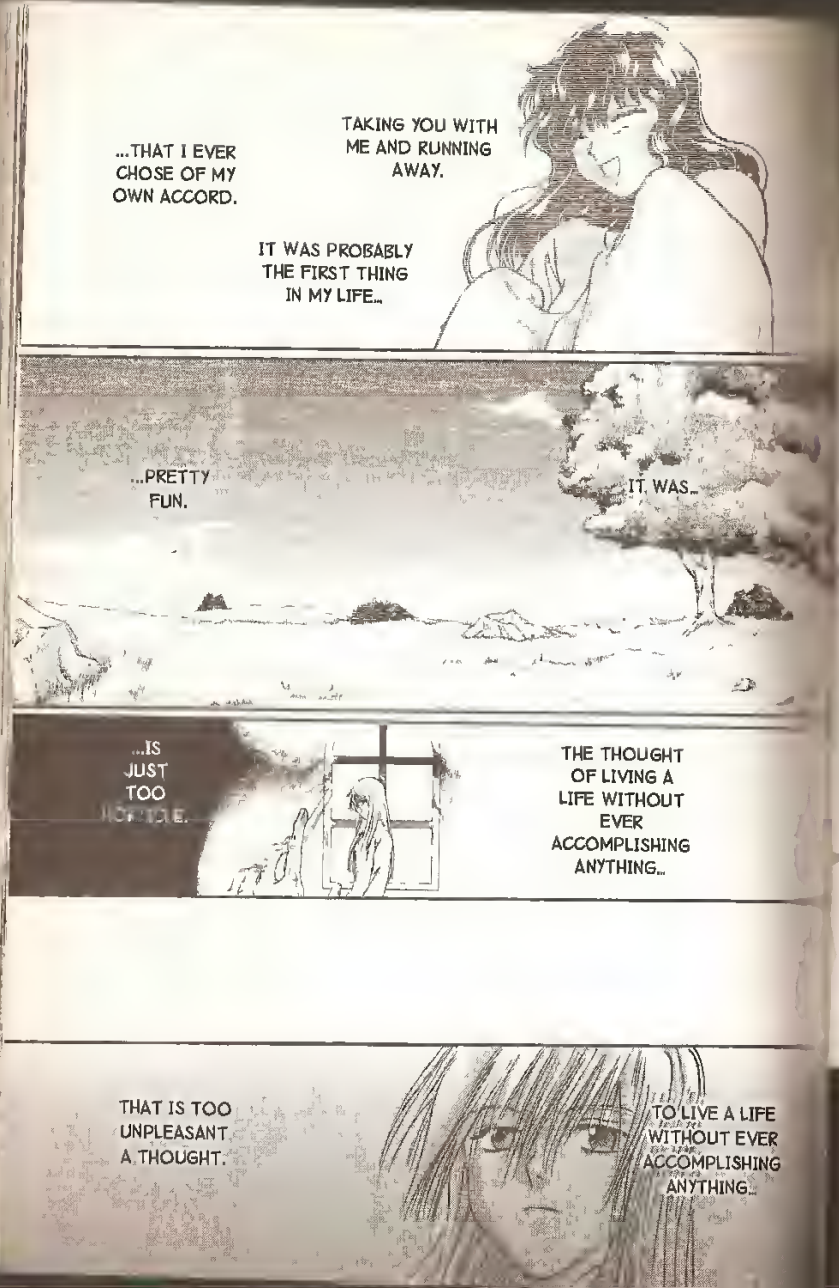
VERY WELL THEN, KURA-CHAN.
WE DIDN'T EXPECT SOMEONE TO REALLY CALL US THAT. NOW WE FEEL AWKWARD.

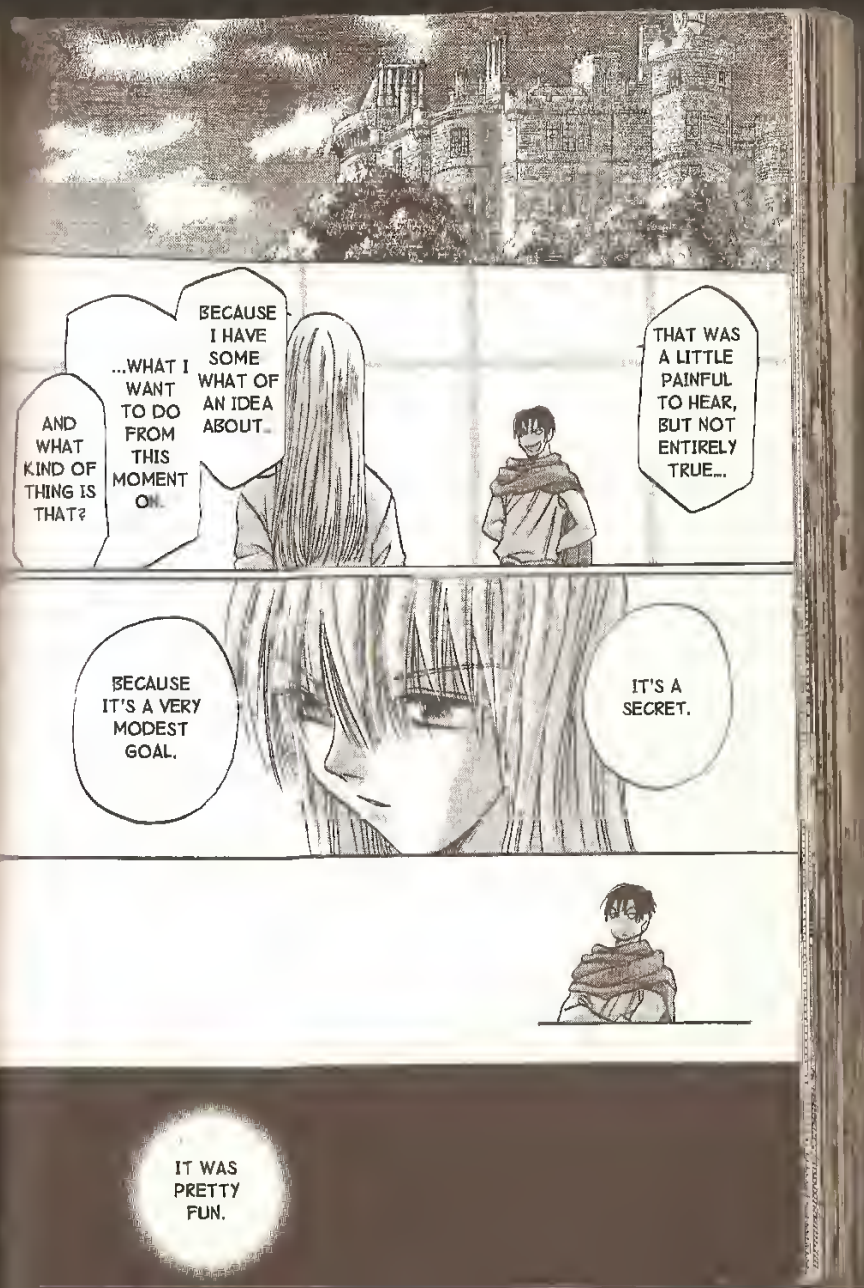


SILENCE.

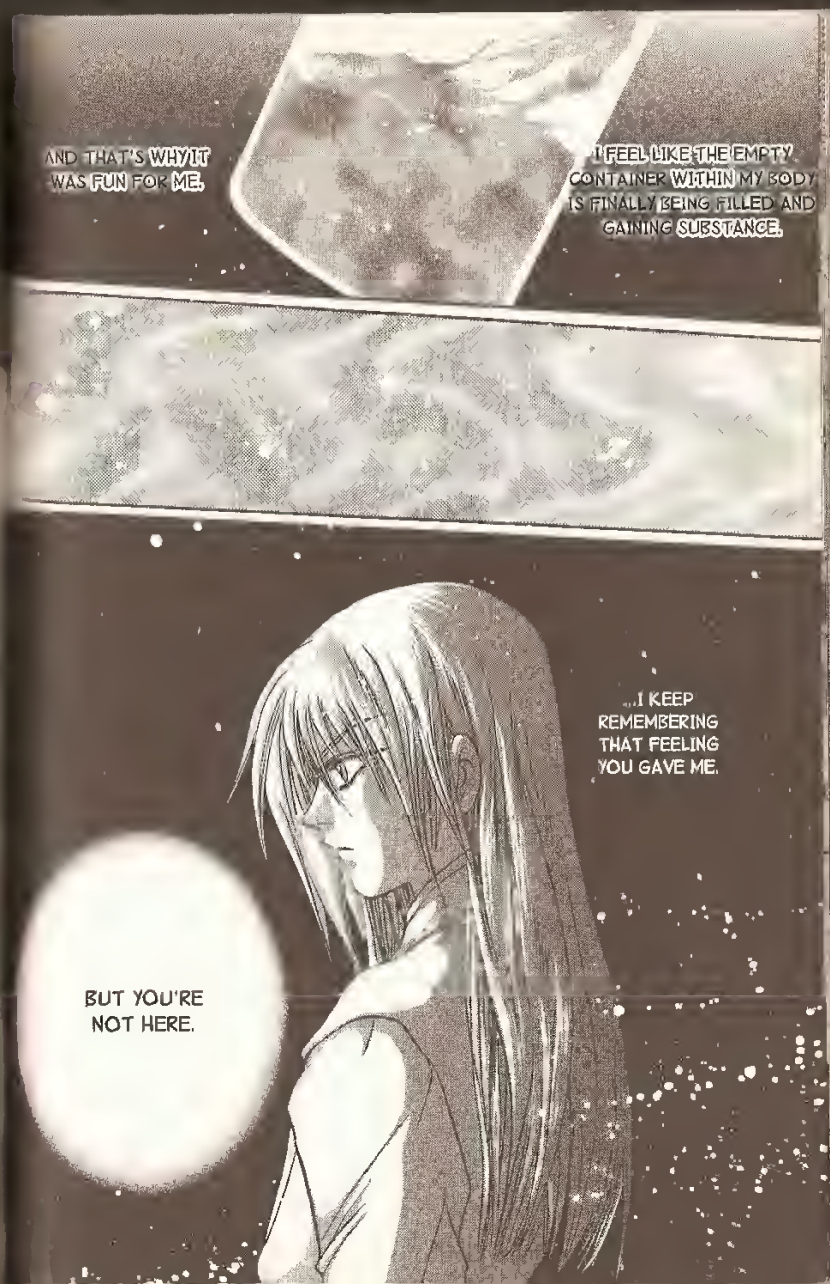
HOW ABOUT, KURA-CHAN?



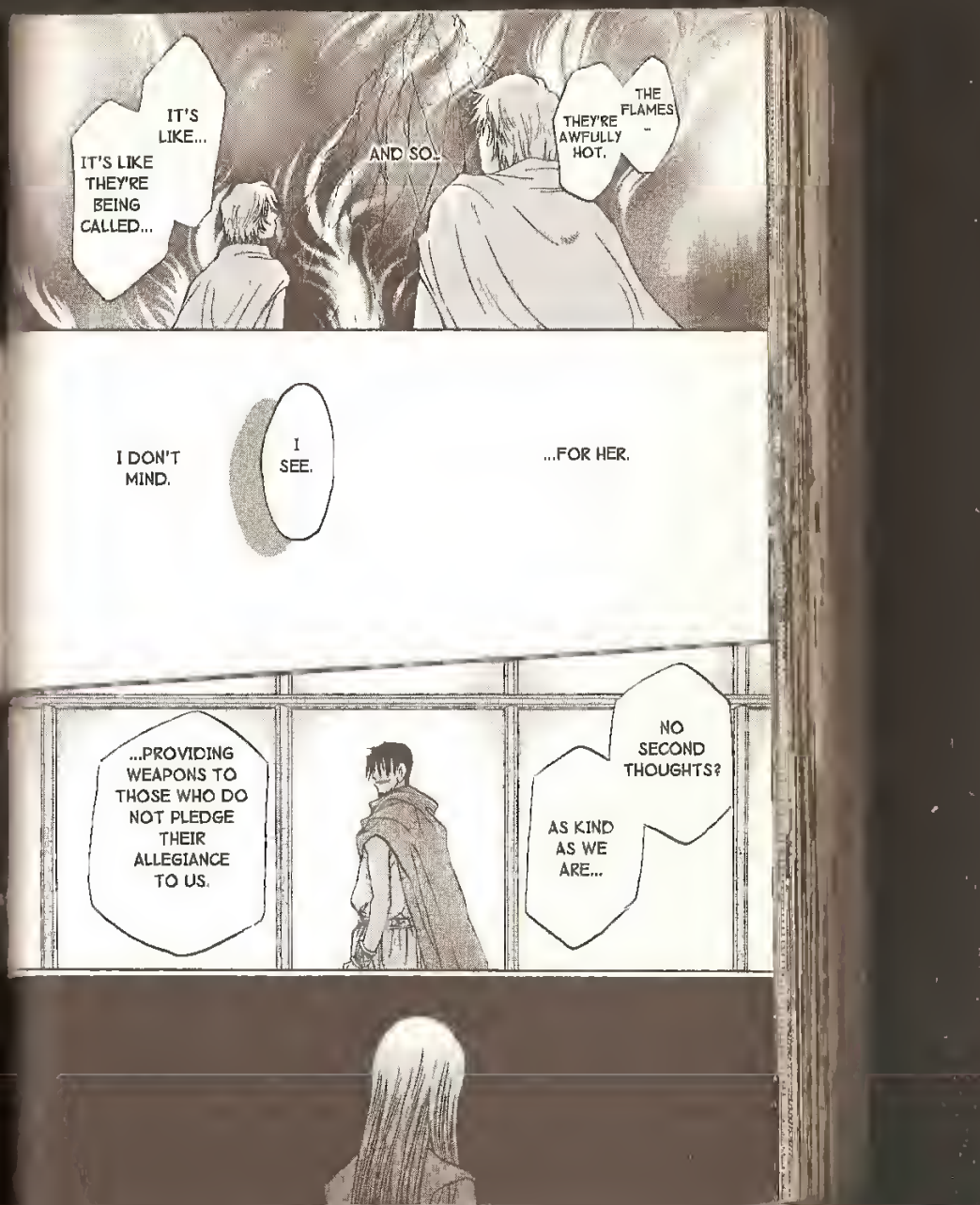

...THAT I EVER CHOSE OF MY OWN ACCORD.
TAKING YOU WITH ME AND RUNNING AWAY.
IT WAS PROBABLY THE FIRST THING IN MY LIFE...
...PRETTY FUN.
IT WAS...
...IS JUST TOO
THE THOUGHT OF LIVING A LIFE WITHOUT EVER ACCOMPLISHING ANYTHING...
THAT IS TOO UNPLEASANT A THOUGHT.
TO LIVE A LIFE WITHOUT EVER ACCOMPLISHING ANYTHING...

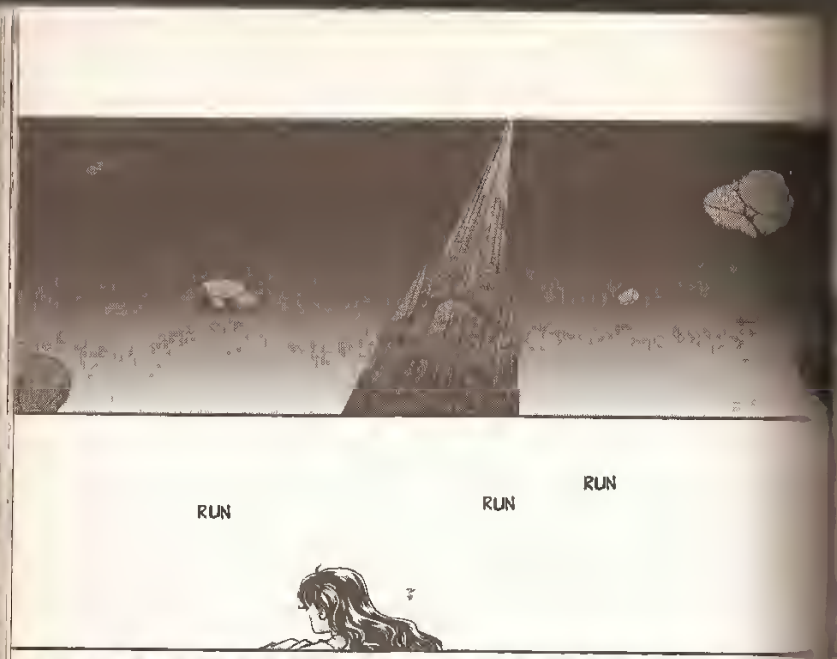

AND WHAT KIND OF THING IS THAT?
...WHAT I WANT TO DO FROM THIS MOMENT ON.
BECAUSE I HAVE SOME WHAT OF AN IDEA ABOUT...
THAT WAS A LITTLE PAINFUL TO HEAR, BUT NOT ENTIRELY TRUE...
BECAUSE IT'S A VERY MODEST GOAL.
IT'S A SECRET.
IT WAS PRETTY FUN.

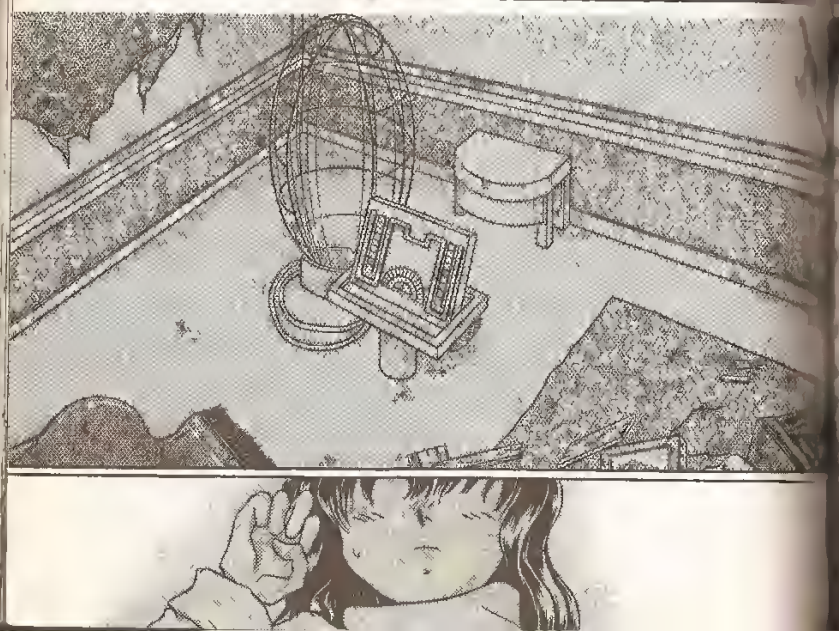
YOU'RE...
...NOT HERE.
IT'S MY WISH...PROBABLY THE VERY FIRST WISH I EVER MADE.
IT'S NOT JUST ANYONE'S WISH.
THERE WERE TIMES THAT I THOUGHT I DIDN'T CARE ANYMORE.
IF I DON'T GET HER BACK, THEN I WON'T EVER BEGIN.
BUT THAT GIRL------

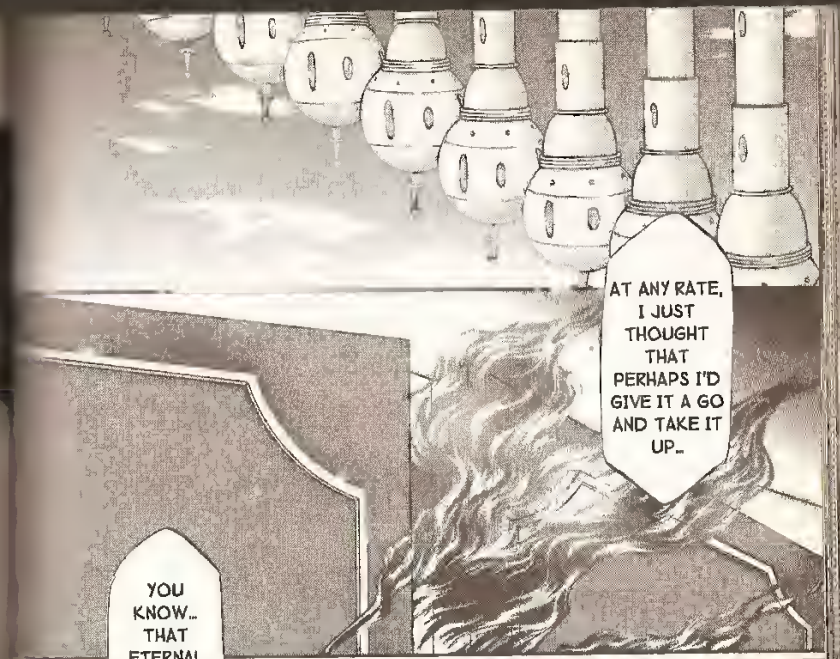

AND THAT'S WHY IT WAS FUN FOR ME.
I FEEL LIKE THE EMPTY CONTAINER WITHIN MY BODY IS FINALLY BEING FILLED AND GAINING SUBSTANCE.
...I KEEP REMEMBERING THAT FEELING YOU GAVE ME.
BUT YOU'RE NOT HERE.

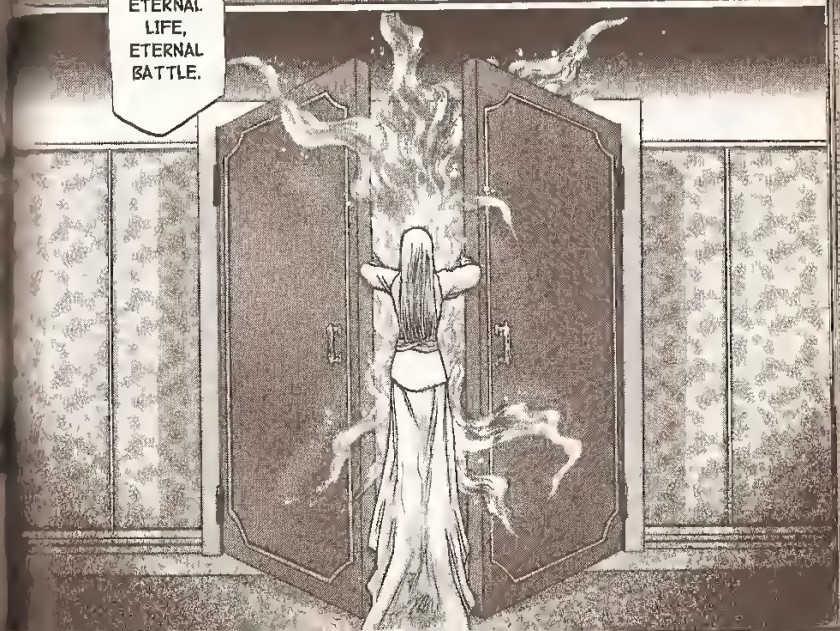
AND REALLY, NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, IT TRULY DOESN'T MATTER TO ME WHO'S IN POWER OR WHO'S NOT.
IT'S NOT LIKE...
...I'D PLEDGE TO OBEY YOU WHOLE-HEARTEDLY.
IF THIS MIGHT BE A SHORT CUT...
BUT TO FIND THAT SLOW LITTLE PRINCESS...
...AND SURRENDER MYSELF TO YOUR COMMAND.
I'LL GLADLY GIVE 100 STEPS...

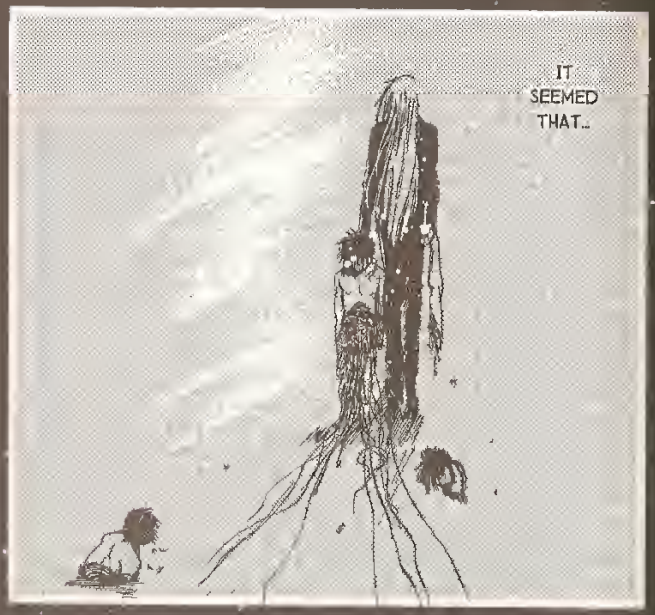

IT'S LIKE THEY'RE BEING CALLED...
IT'S LIKE...
AND SO...
THEY'RE AWFULLY HOT.
THE FLAMES...
I DON'T MIND.
I SEE.
...FOR HER.
...PROVIDING WEAPONS TO THOSE WHO DO NOT PLEDGE THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO US.
AS KIND AS WE ARE...
NO SECOND THOUGHTS?


RUN
RUN
RUN



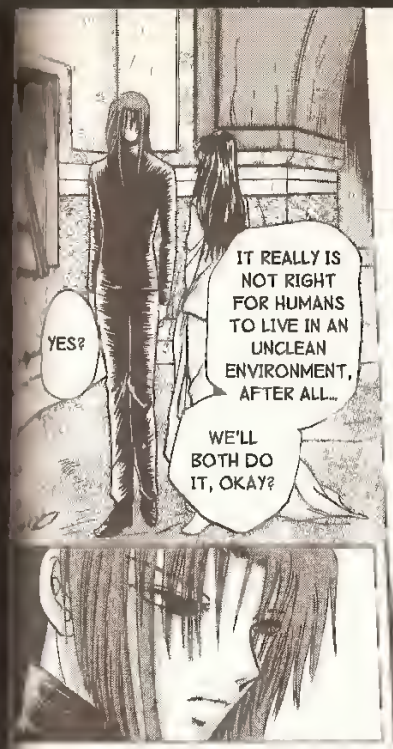

AT ANY RATE, I JUST THOUGHT THAT PERHAPS I'D GIVE IT A GO AND TAKE IT UP..

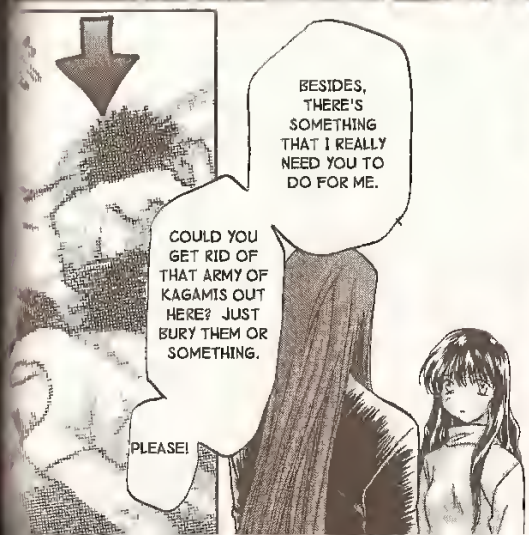

YOU KNOW.. THAT ETERNAL LIFE, ETERNAL BATTLE.

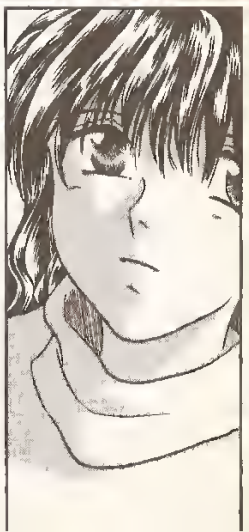


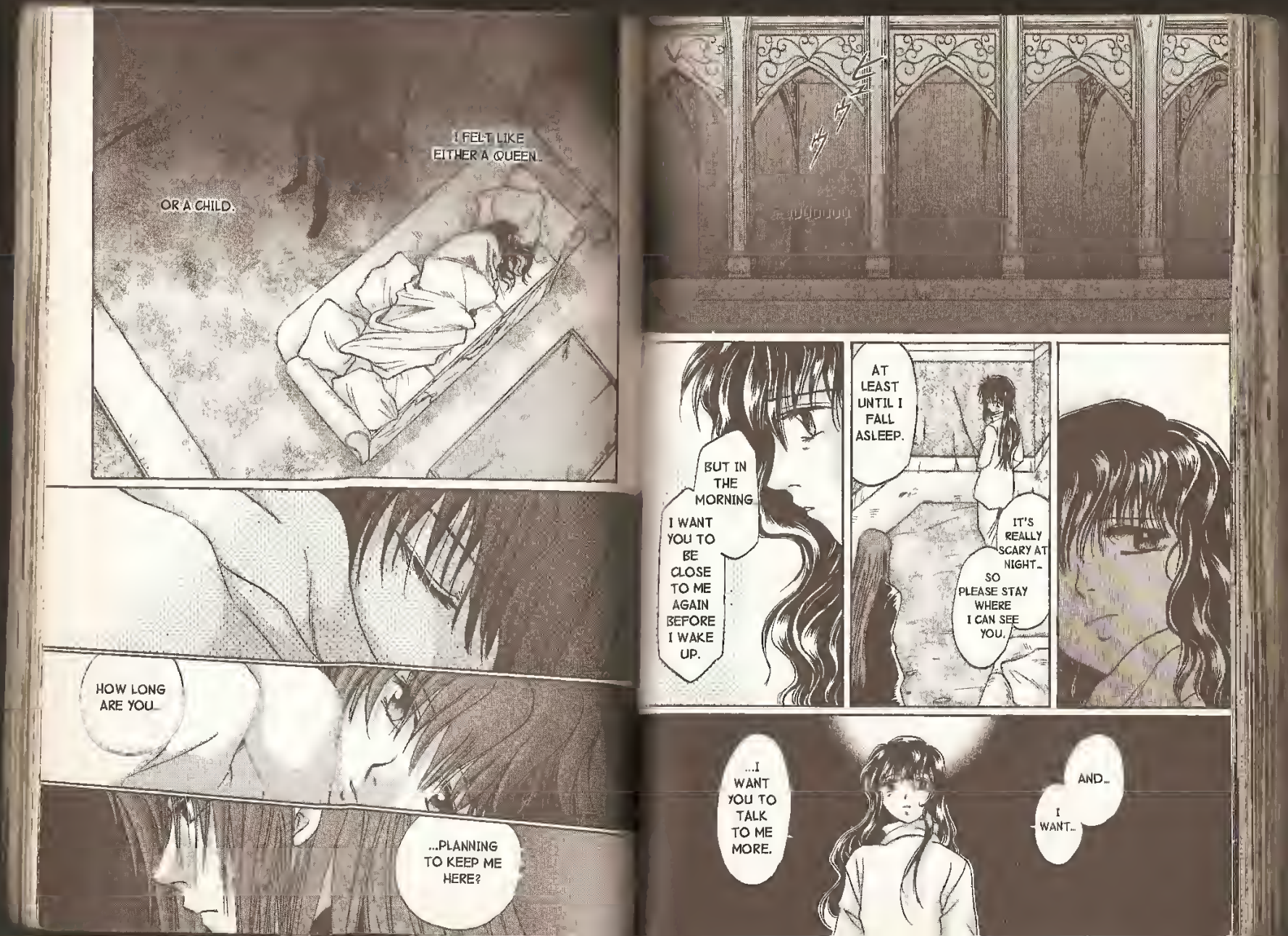
...ALMOST ANYTHING THAT I REQUESTED FROM HIM.

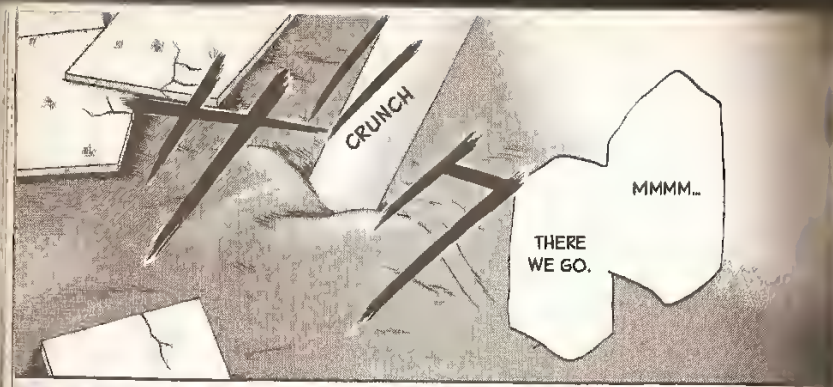
SEEU WAS PREPARED TO DO..

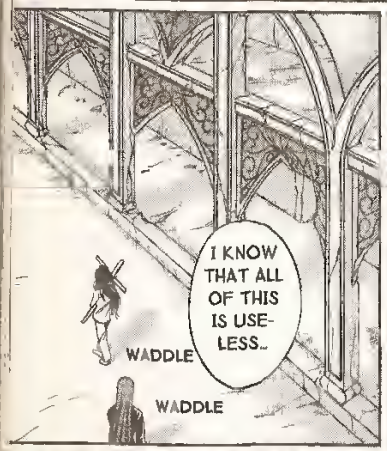



BESIDES, THERE'S SOMETHING THAT I REALLY NEED YOU TO DO FOR ME.
COULD YOU GET RID OF THAT ARMY OF KAGAMIS OUT HERE? JUST BURY THEM OR SOMETHING.
PLEASE!

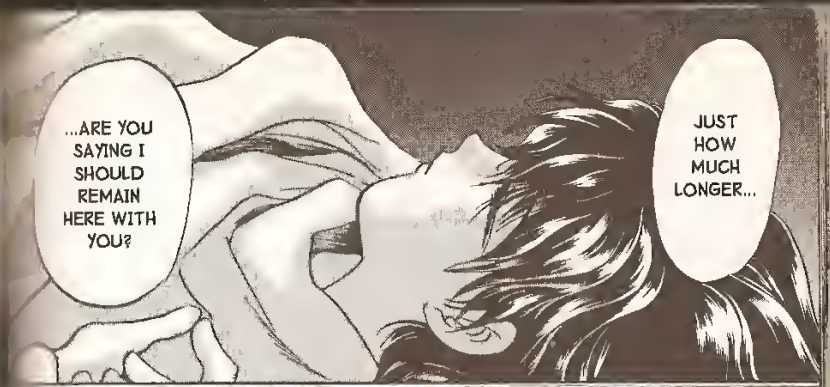


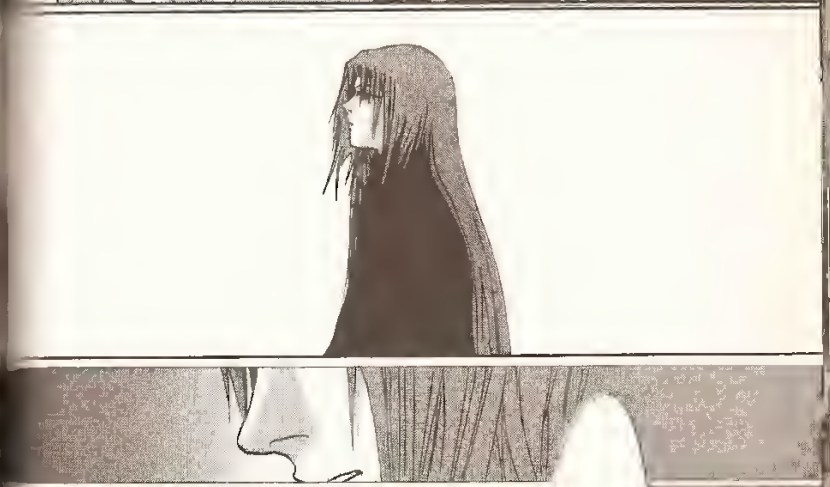

I FELT LIKE EITHER A QUEEN...
OR A CHILD.
HOW LONG ARE YOU...
...PLANNING TO KEEP ME HERE?
BUT IN THE MORNING I WANT YOU TO BE CLOSE TO ME AGAIN BEFORE I WAKE UP.
AT LEAST UNTIL I FALL ASLEEP.
IT'S REALLY SCARY AT NIGHT... SO PLEASE STAY WHERE I CAN SEE YOU.
...I WANT YOU TO TALK TO ME MORE.
AND... I WANT...

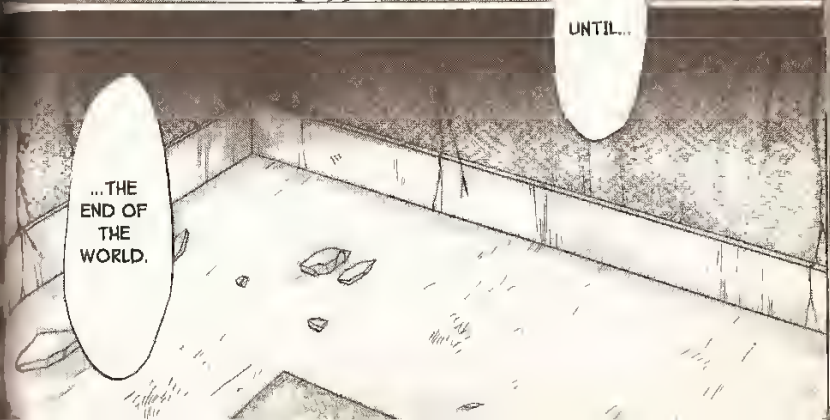

CRUNCH
MMMM...
THERE WE GO.

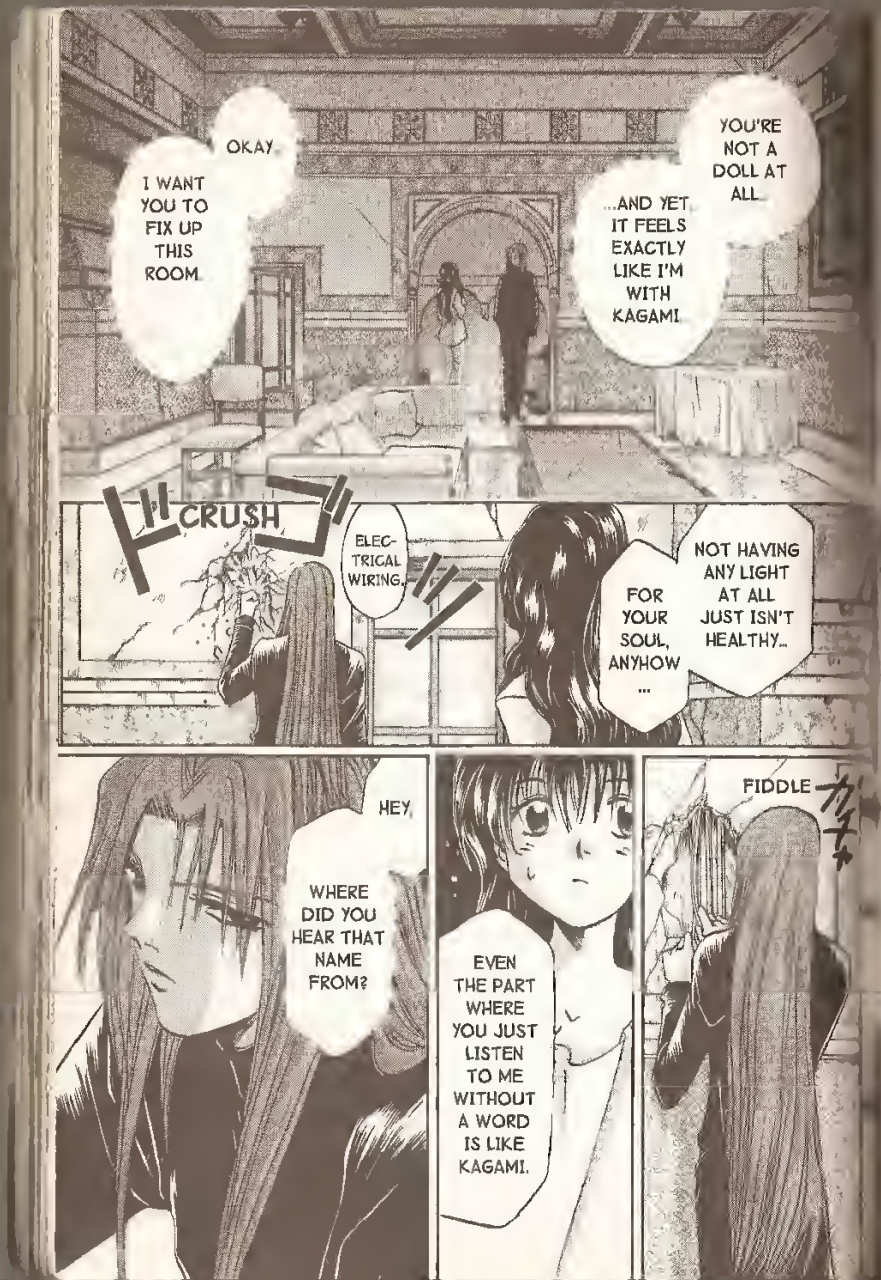

I KNOW THAT ALL OF THIS IS USE-LESS..
WADDLE
WADDLE

SO I'LL DO ALL OF THIS MYSELF, OKAY?

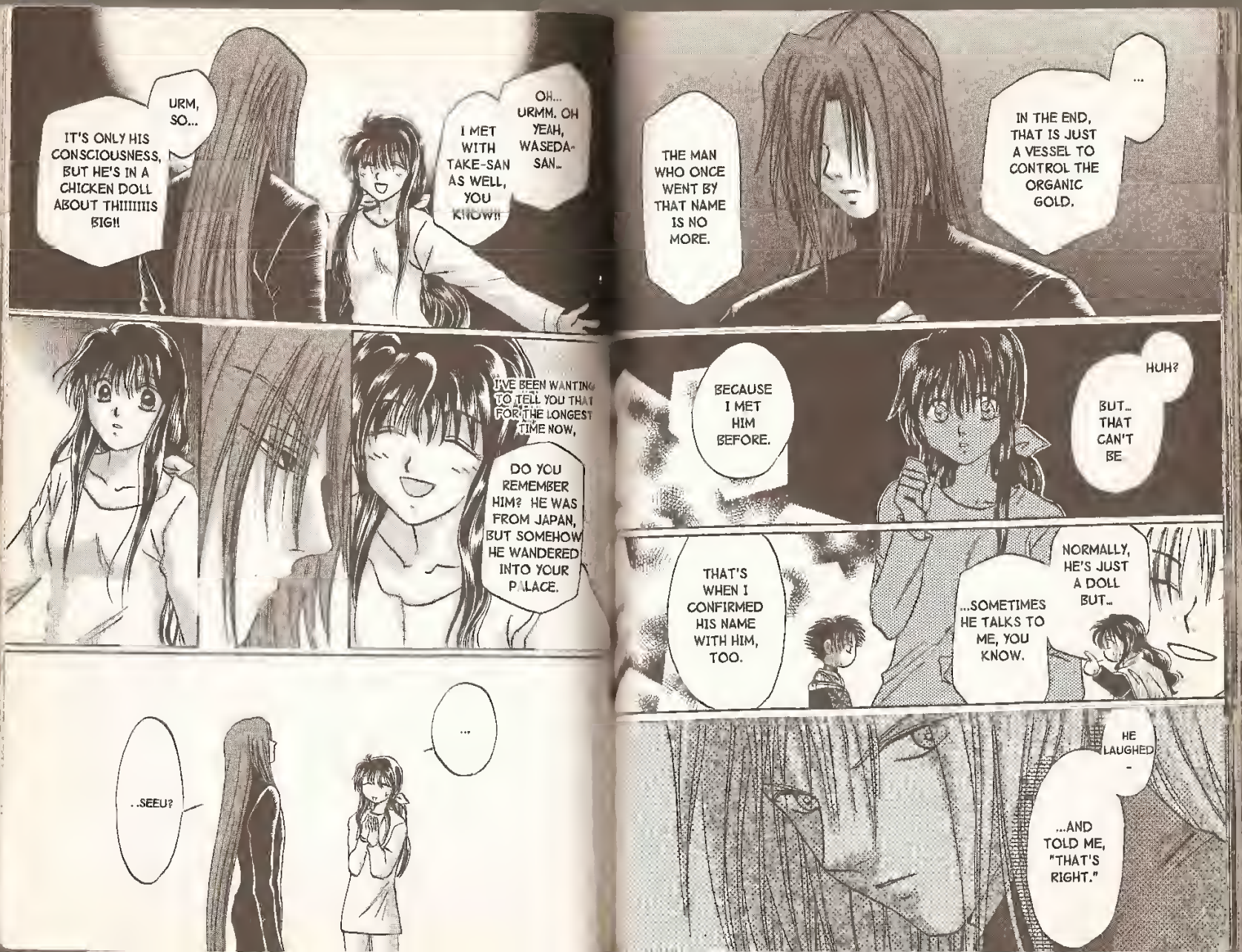

...ARE YOU SAYING I SHOULD REMAIN HERE WITH YOU?
JUST HOW MUCH LONGER...




UNTIL...
...THE END OF THE WORLD.


OKAY.
I WANT YOU TO FIX UP THIS ROOM.
YOU'RE NOT A DOLL AT ALL.
...AND YET IT FEELS EXACTLY LIKE I'M WITH KAGAMI.
CRUSH
ELEC-TRICAL WIRING.
FOR YOUR SOUL, ANYHOW ...
NOT HAVING ANY LIGHT AT ALL JUST ISN'T HEALTHY...
HEY.
WHERE DID YOU HEAR THAT NAME FROM?
EVEN THE PART WHERE YOU JUST LISTEN TO ME WITHOUT A WORD IS LIKE KAGAMI.
FIDDLE

I WANT TO MAKE A GRAVE-STONE FOR EACH OF THEM.
GUTS
ONCE ALL THOSE HUMAN DOLLS ARE BURIED,
BEAM
IT'S SO WEIRD.

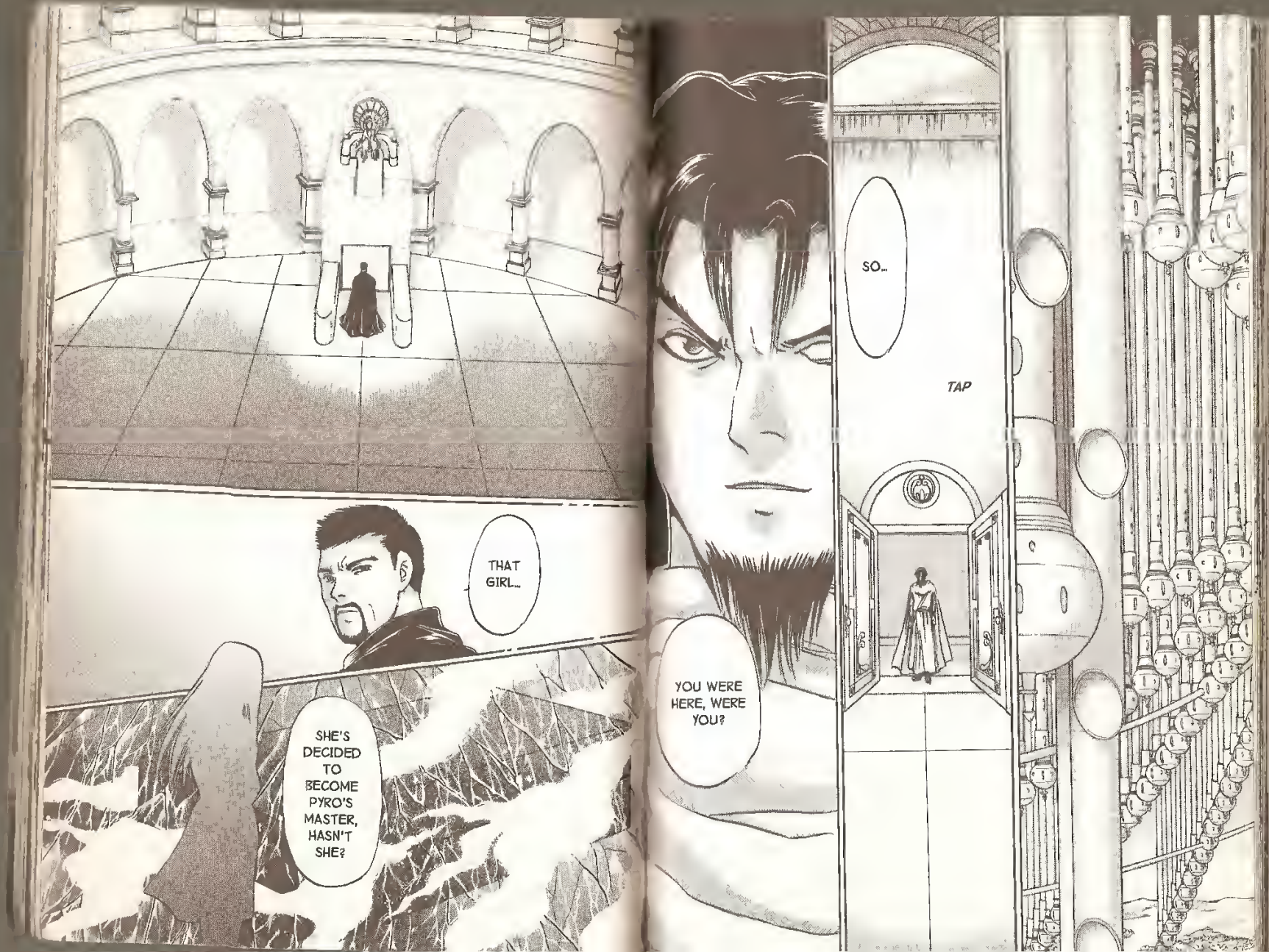

URM, SO...
IT'S ONLY HIS CONSCIOUSNESS, BUT HE'S IN A CHICKEN DOLL ABOUT THIIIIIIIS BIG!!
OH... URMM. OH YEAH, WASEDA-SAN...
I MET WITH TAKE-SAN AS WELL, YOU KNOW!!
I'VE BEEN WANTING TO TELL YOU THAT FOR THE LONGEST TIME NOW,
DO YOU REMEMBER HIM? HE WAS FROM JAPAN, BUT SOMEHOW HE WANDERED INTO YOUR PALACE.
..SEEU?
...
THE MAN WHO ONCE WENT BY THAT NAME IS NO MORE.
IN THE END, THAT IS JUST A VESSEL TO CONTROL THE ORGANIC GOLD.
...
BECAUSE I MET HIM BEFORE.
HUH?
BUT... THAT CAN'T BE
THAT'S WHEN I CONFIRMED HIS NAME WITH HIM, TOO.
...SOMETIMES HE TALKS TO ME, YOU KNOW.
NORMALLY, HE'S JUST A DOLL BUT...
HE LAUGHED -
...AND TOLD ME, "THAT'S RIGHT."

SLIDE...
WHAT KIND OF ... ... PERSON IS HE!?
EH?... WHO?... WHO IS IT?
!? ... KAGAMI !?
OH, NO! WHICH ONE IS IT? WHICH ONE'S THE RECEIVE BUTTON AGAIN?
PRESS
PRESS
BUT SEEU'S RIGHT HERE...
THE LITTLE HOLOGRAPHY MACHINE IS MAKING NOISES..
PI PI PI PI
EH...?
SNOOZE
SLEEP
BUMP
FALL
EH!?
WHA!
WHY ARE YOU SLEEPING ALL OF A SUDDEN?
AND SLEEPING WHILE YOU'RE STANDING?

BLACK HAIR AND BLUE EYES!!
I FOUND PRINCESS KAGUYA!!
..EEP?
S..
S..
S..
..SOME-ONE I DON'T KNOW!!
URRM...
URRM... I...

OH!!
EH!?
SEEU!
WHY DIDN'T YOU CONTACT
WHOOOA!?

I'M SO GLAD. I MEAN, PRINCESS KAGUYA'S GOTTA BE A CUTE GIRL, AFTER ALL.
YOU ARE SUCH A CUTIE-CUTIE, AIN'T CHA!
OH MY GOD, WHAT A CUTIE!!
RIGHT!! I'M TELLING YOU, IT'S ALL GOOD FOR MORALE!!
UMM
TOO SIM-PLE!
HOW SHOULD I PUT THIS... OTHERWISE, THERE JUST WOULDN'T BE ANY ROMANCE IN IT.
IT'S SOOOO NICE TO MEETCHA!
I'M A RELATIVE OF MESHIE LARACOTT. YOU KNOW, HE'S ONE OF THE GREAT WAR'S THREE SAGES
OH, BOY.
OH, YEAH...
MY NAME'S HARLI LARA-COTT.


SHE'S DECIDED TO BECOME PYRO'S MASTER, HASN'T SHE?
THAT GIRL...
YOU WERE HERE, WERE YOU?
SO...
TAP

RAGUNA DIED, AND PYRO CHOSE A NEW MASTER...
WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU THINK THAT?
BUT GOLD HAS YET TO CHOOSE ANOTHER.
STARE!
ARE YOU MAD? ARE YOU SAYING HE...
...
WE HAVE HEARD A TALE BEFORE...
AND WHY WOULD GOLD ATTACH ITSELF TO A MERE "DOLL," AND LISTEN TO SEEU'S BIDDING, OF ALL PEOPLE?
!
ARE YOU SAYING...
BUT HOW CAN THAT BE? THE TIMING'S ALL OFF.
...THAT KAGAMI LIVES ON IN THAT DOLL?
THEY WERE HOUSES OF THE SOUL
THE DOLLS OF THE SECOND WORLD WERE ORIGINALLY CREATED SO THAT THE SOULS OF THOSE WHOSE BODIES HAD DIED COULD BE HARBORED WITHIN THEM.

IS KAGAMI TRULY DEAD?
THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT MEANS WE NOW HAVE COMMAND OVER NOT ONLY HE WHO MAY NOT PARTAKE, BUT OVER THREE LIVING WEAPONS AS WELL.
...
...
HEY...
LET US ASK YOU STRAIGHT OUT...

EVERY SO OFTEN..
...I USED TO THINK THAT..
...HE JUST KNEW..
...THAT HE KNEW THE FUTURE.. THE FUTURE THAT IS NOW.

IS IT EVEN POSSIBLE..
...TO RECALL A SOUL INTO A DOLL CREATED AFTER THE PERSON'S DEATH?
AT LEAST DURING THE GREAT WAR, I NEVER ONCE SAW SEEU WALKING AROUND WITH A DOLL LIKE THAT.
...
STILL, IT IRKS ME.
I CAN'T HELP BUT BELIEVE THAT KAGAMI WAS KEEPING SOME SECRET TO HIMSELF ALL THIS TIME.
IT JUST DOES.
IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN THAT WOULD MEAN SEEU COULD EASILY BRING RAGUNA BACK TO LIFE. COULD HE NOT?
IF THE PRINCE COULD PERFORM SUCH A FEAT, WOULD HE NOT HAVE BROUGHT BACK HIS OWN PEOPLE FIRST?
I DON'T BELIEVE IT COULD BE POSSIBLE.

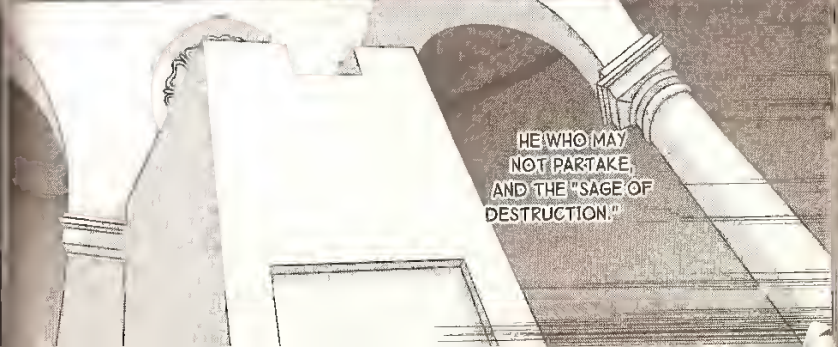
NO ONE KNOWS WHO THIS MAN WAS BEFORE HE BECAME SUCH A SAGE...

...BUT AT THE SAME TIME, DUE TO THE MASSIVE AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE THAT IS RELAYED TO THAT MAN MUST CANNOT TAKE THE PAIN AND THUS SIMPLY BECOME A VEGETABLE.
IT IS SAID THAT THOSE WHO DO NOT PARTAKE OF ANY FOOD ARE ABLE TO COMMUNE WITH ALL THINGS IN NATURE..

AT THE MOMENT

DO YOU HEAR ME, YOU IDIOT?!
IF YOU HAD JUST GIVEN UP THE ACT AND TALKED, THEN WE WOULDN'T BE GOING THROUGH ALL THIS TROUBLE
HEY, DIDIUS

A SAGE WITH THE LIKES OF MESHIE AND GAVIES...
...DEI.


HE WHO MAY NOT PARTAKE, AND THE "SAGE OF DESTRUCTION."

AND COMMANDED TO HAVE HIS MOUTH SEWN SHUT.

UNTIL KURA REACHED THE END OF HIS PATIENCE.

THERE'S NOTHING REMOTELY FUN ABOUT KNOWING ONLY THE END OF THINGS.

HE MUST BE THE MOST BORING INDIVIDUAL IN THIS WORLD.

...WITH THE FARCE KNOWN AS THE "END OF THE WORLD."

IT'S NOT THAT... IT'S REALLY NOT ALL THAT FUN.

WE SHOULD ALL CONTINUE ON GRACEFULLY AND HAVE FUN...

...CHOSEN TO LIVE AS THE GATE-KEEPER OF ALL KNOWLEDGE RATHER THAN AS A NORMAL MAN.

...WE KNOW THAT THIS MAN HAS ALWAYS...

...KNEW ONLY TO SPEAK WORDS OF DESTRUCTION FROM THIS MOUTH.

AND THIS GATEKEEPER...

UTTERING ONLY EACH AND EVERY PROPHECY OF DESTRUCTION AND DOOM, DAY AFTER DAY.

HE LISTENED TO NO ONE, AND ANSWERED NO QUESTIONS.

FROM THAT BOUNDLESS OCEAN OF KNOWLEDGE, ALL HE DID WAS WEAVE CURSE UPON CURSE...

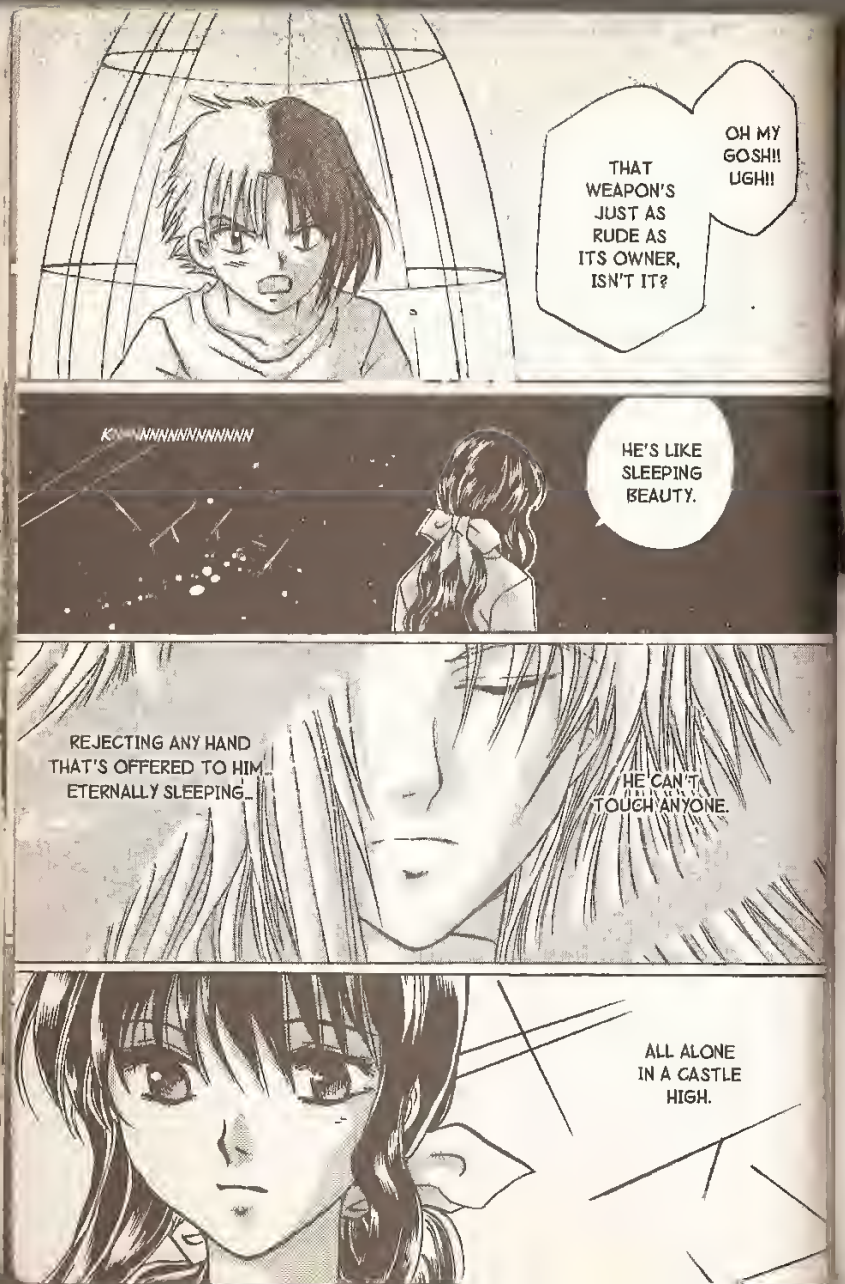
HE SIMPLY SPOKE DAY AFTER DAY WITHOUT ANY LOGICAL CONNECTIONS... WITHOUT ANY LIMIT OR END...

HE SPOKE ABOUT A PERSON'S DEATH OR THE DOWNFALL OF NATION...ABOUT THE ANNIHILATION OF A PLANET, OR THE END OF THE WORLD.

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE I LAST STOOD UP?
HE MAY BE KINDA GOOD LOOKING, BUT HE'S JUST A PERVERT, ISN'T HE?
HE REALLY SAID THAT, DID HE?
IF YOU DON'T MIND MY SAYING SO, HE'S KINDA SCARY, ISN'T HE?
EWWW, IT'S KINDA GROSS. KINDA LIKE A STALKER OR SOMETHING.
I MEAN NORMALLY
...YOU WOULDN'T EVEN WANT TO BE IN A PLACE LIKE THAT EVEN FOR A SECOND.
SO, YOU'RE GONNA STAY HERE UNTIL THE END OF THE WORLD?
HMMMMM.
SO HARLIE'S MADE CONTACT WITH THE GIRL, HAS HE?
I SEE.
I'M SURE HE'S ALL KNACKERED OUT FROM WAITING, AS WELL.
CALL GAVIES.
CRACK
CRACK
LET'S SEE NOW.

..THOUGHT THAT IF HE WAS SLEEPING LIKE THAT, HE MIGHT CATCH A COLD.
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
I JUST..
BESIDES, HE'S NOT A BIG SOFTIE OR ANYTHING.
OH, JUST LEAVE HIM ALONE. HE'S USED TO IT.
I WONDER ...
BUT..

HMMM..
THAT'S WHAT I'M JUST NOT SURE ABOUT.
HUH?
BY THE WAY, WHAT'S HE SLEEPING FOR?
AT FIRST, I WAS SO SCARED..
...BUT NOW, I'M NOT SCARED AT ALL.
I'M NOT SCARED..
...THAT I COULD JUST DISREGARD HIS PRESENCE LIKE THAT AND TALK TO SOMEONE LIKE THIS.
IT'S SO WEIRD..
SURE.
..I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL A LITTLE BIT GUILTY ABOUT IT.
...LET'S TALK AGAIN LATER, OKAY?
HEY, I'M GONNA CALL THE OLD MAN SO..
I WONDER WHY..

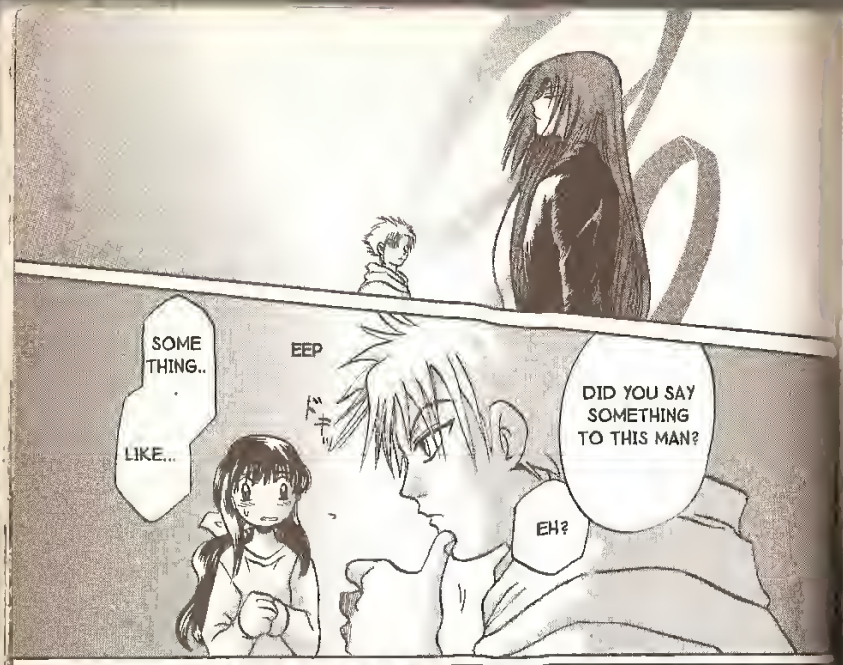

THAT WEAPON'S JUST AS RUDE AS ITS OWNER, ISN'T IT?
OH MY GOSH!! UGH!!
KYYYYYYYYYYYYYY
HE'S LIKE SLEEPING BEAUTY.
REJECTING ANY HAND THAT'S OFFERED TO HIM... ETERNALLY SLEEPING...
HE CAN'T TOUCH ANYONE.
ALL ALONE IN A CASTLE HIGH.

GAAASSSHHHHH
KYYYA AAAA AAH!!
BE CARE-FUL!
LUNAR ...
YOU'RE PROTECTING HIM, AREN'T YOU...
...PROTECTING YOUR MASTER?

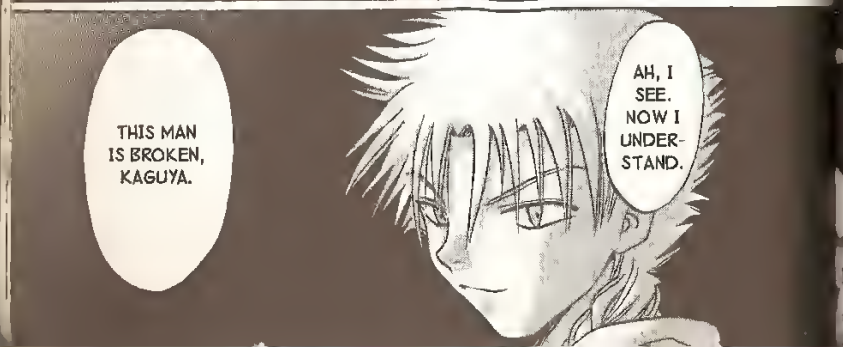
GEEZER !!
MY NAME IS MESHIE LARACOTT.
EHI?
IT'S VERY NICE TO FINALLY MEET YOU,
KAGUYA.

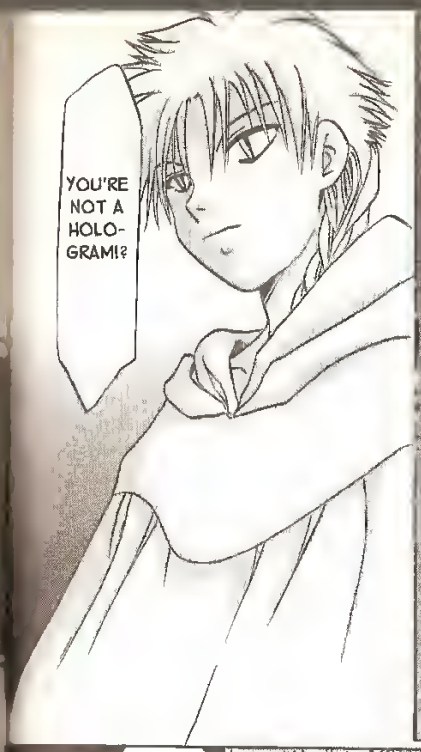
PLEASE WAKE UP.

OH GOOD, SEEU'S SLEEPING..
...I MUST SAY, THIS IS JUST THE PERFECT CIRCUMSTANCE, ISN'T IT?

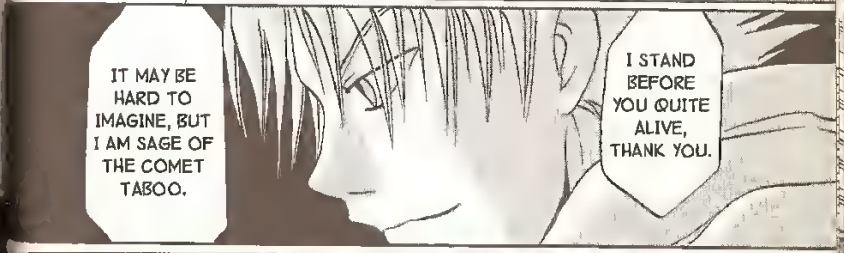

SOME THING..
.
LIKE...
EEP
DID YOU SAY SOMETHING TO THIS MAN?
EH?

...AND ABOUT KAGAMI.
I TALKED ABOUT THAT...
...I HAD MET SOMEONE THAT SEEU KNEW FROM THE PAST.

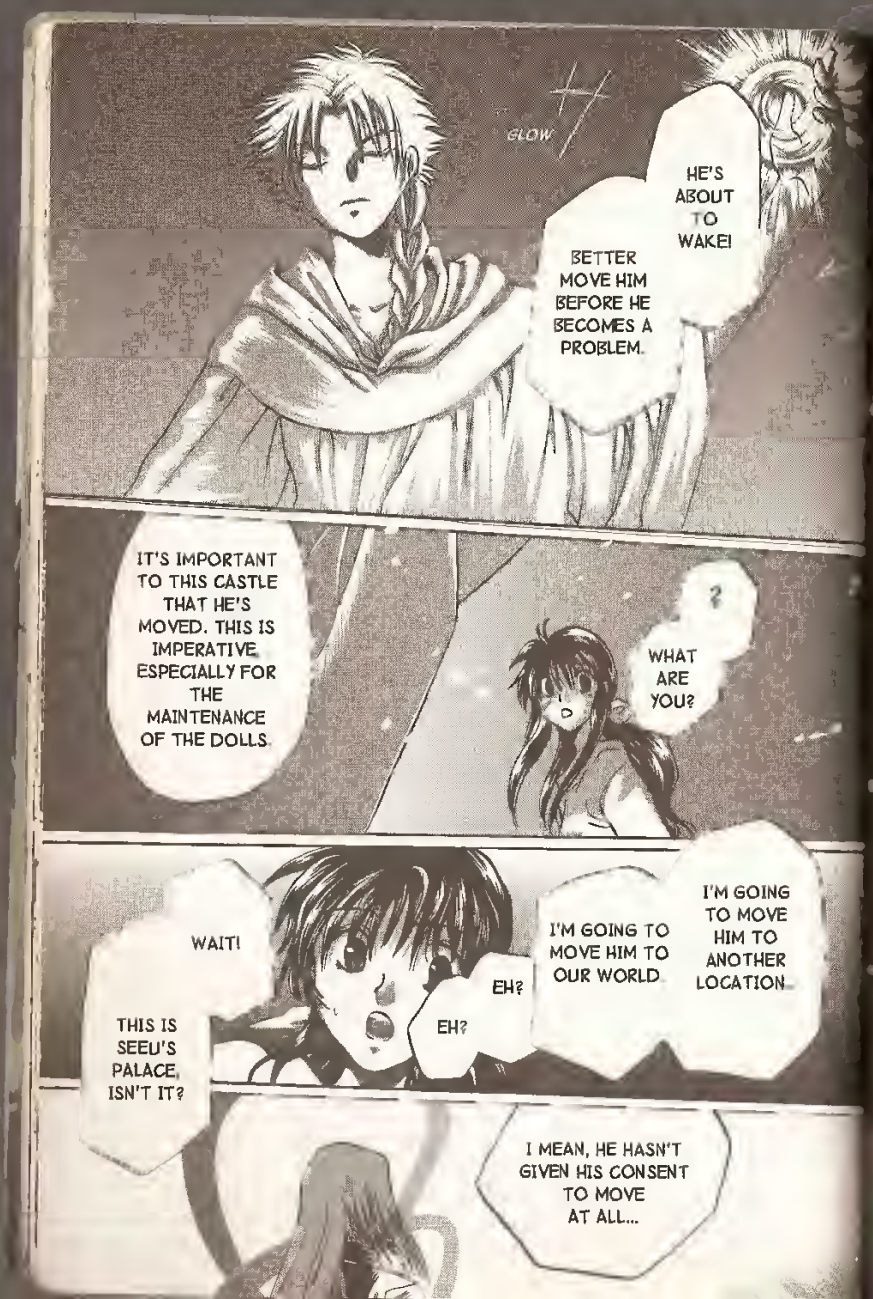

THIS MAN IS BROKEN, KAGUYA.
AH, I SEE. NOW I UNDER-STAND.

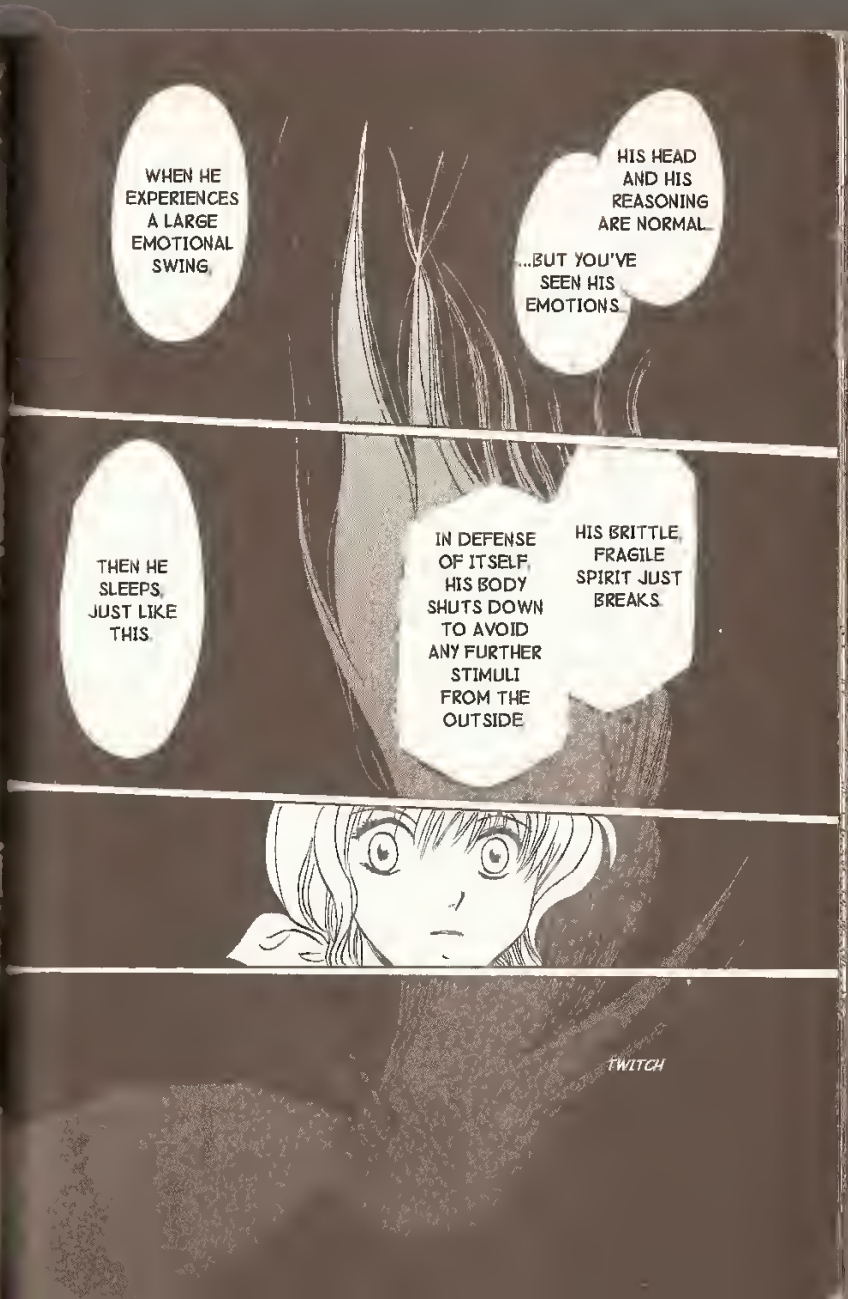

YOU'RE NOT A HOLO-GRAM!?

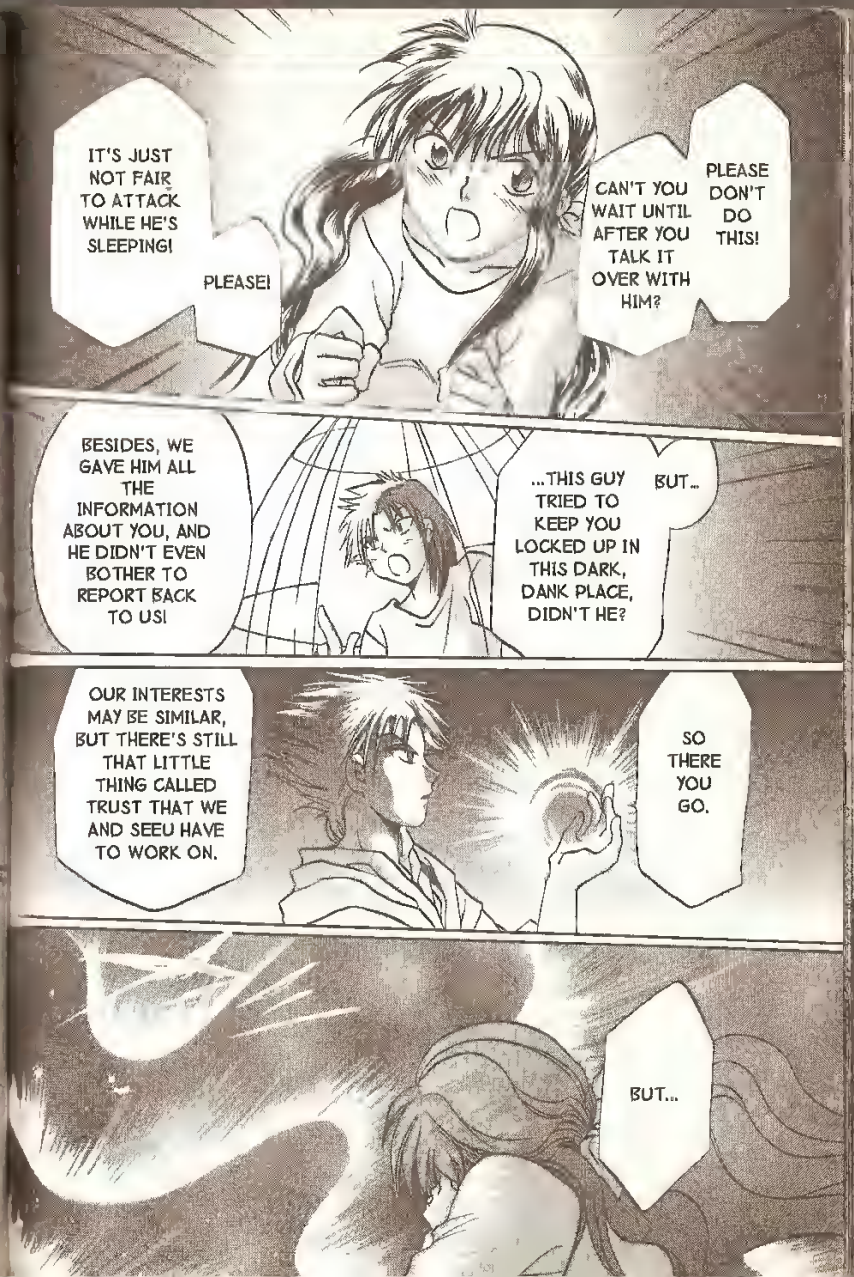
HOW DID YOU...?!
EH?
EH?
YOU ...

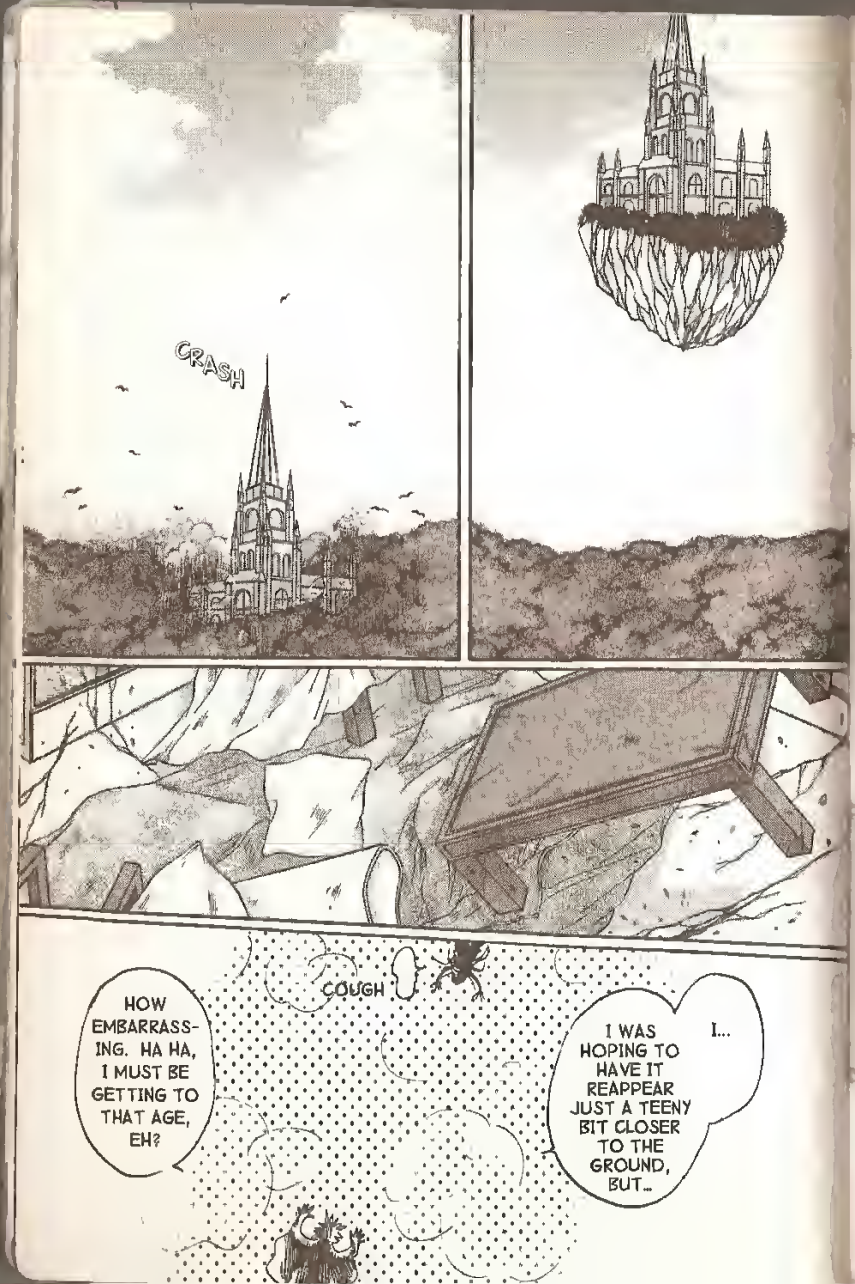

IT MAY BE HARD TO IMAGINE, BUT I AM SAGE OF THE COMET TABOO.
I STAND BEFORE YOU QUITE ALIVE, THANK YOU.

I'M ABLE TO TRAVEL BETWEEN WORLDS WITHOUT THE AID OF THE COLLAPSER

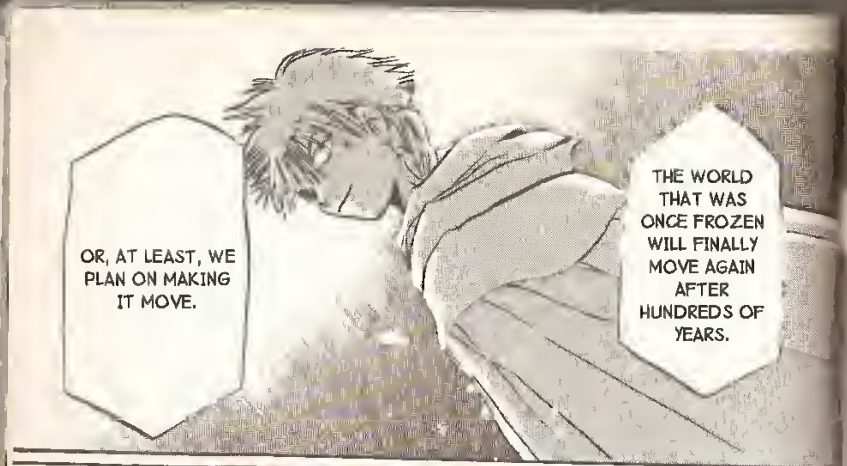

GLOW
HE'S ABOUT TO WAKE!
BETTER MOVE HIM BEFORE HE BECOMES A PROBLEM.
IT'S IMPORTANT TO THIS CASTLE THAT HE'S MOVED. THIS IS IMPERATIVE, ESPECIALLY FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE DOLLS.
?
WHAT ARE YOU?
WAIT!
THIS IS SEEU'S PALACE, ISN'T IT?
EH?
EH?
I'M GOING TO MOVE HIM TO OUR WORLD.
I'M GOING TO MOVE HIM TO ANOTHER LOCATION.
I MEAN, HE HASN'T GIVEN HIS CONSENT TO MOVE AT ALL...


WHEN HE EXPERIENCES A LARGE EMOTIONAL SWING,
HIS HEAD AND HIS REASONING ARE NORMAL.
...BUT YOU'VE SEEN HIS EMOTIONS.
THEN HE SLEEPS, JUST LIKE THIS.
IN DEFENSE OF ITSELF, HIS BODY SHUTS DOWN TO AVOID ANY FURTHER STIMULI FROM THE OUTSIDE.
HIS BRITTLE, FRAGILE SPIRIT JUST BREAKS.
TWITCH

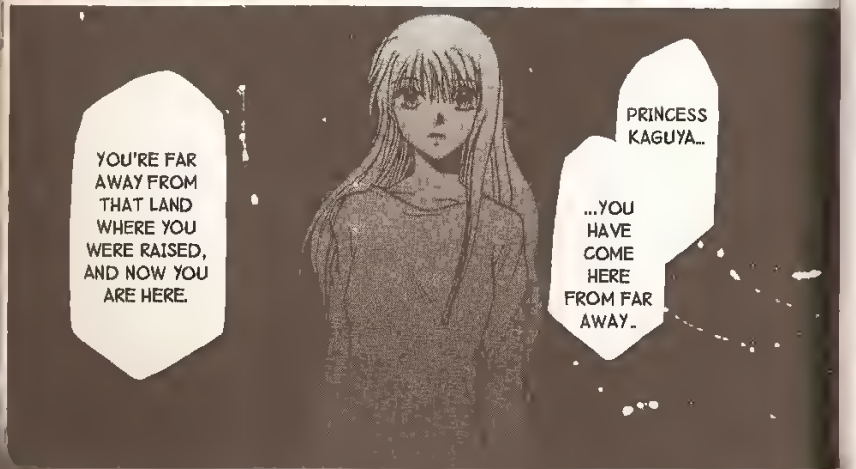

IT'S JUST NOT FAIR TO ATTACK WHILE HE'S SLEEPING!
PLEASE!
CAN'T YOU WAIT UNTIL AFTER YOU TALK IT OVER WITH HIM?
PLEASE DON'T DO THIS!
BESIDES, WE GAVE HIM ALL THE INFORMATION ABOUT YOU, AND HE DIDN'T EVEN BOTHER TO REPORT BACK TO US!
...THIS GUY TRIED TO KEEP YOU LOCKED UP IN THIS DARK, DANK PLACE, DIDN'T HE?
BUT...
OUR INTERESTS MAY BE SIMILAR, BUT THERE'S STILL THAT LITTLE THING CALLED TRUST THAT WE AND SEEU HAVE TO WORK ON.
SO THERE YOU GO.
BUT...

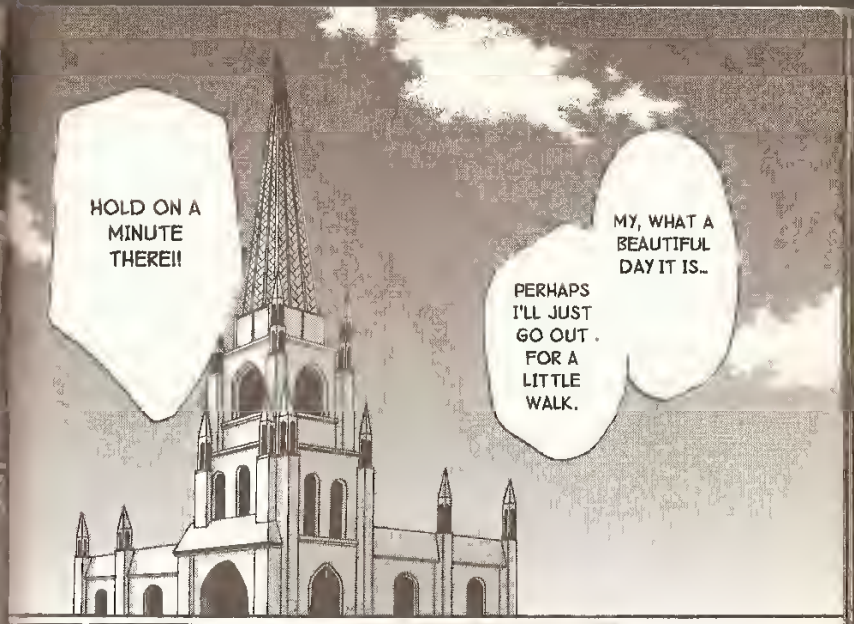

CRASH
COUGH
HOW EMBARRASSING. HA HA, I MUST BE GETTING TO THAT AGE, EH?
I WAS HOPING TO HAVE IT REAPPEAR JUST A TEENY BIT CLOSER TO THE GROUND, BUT...
I...

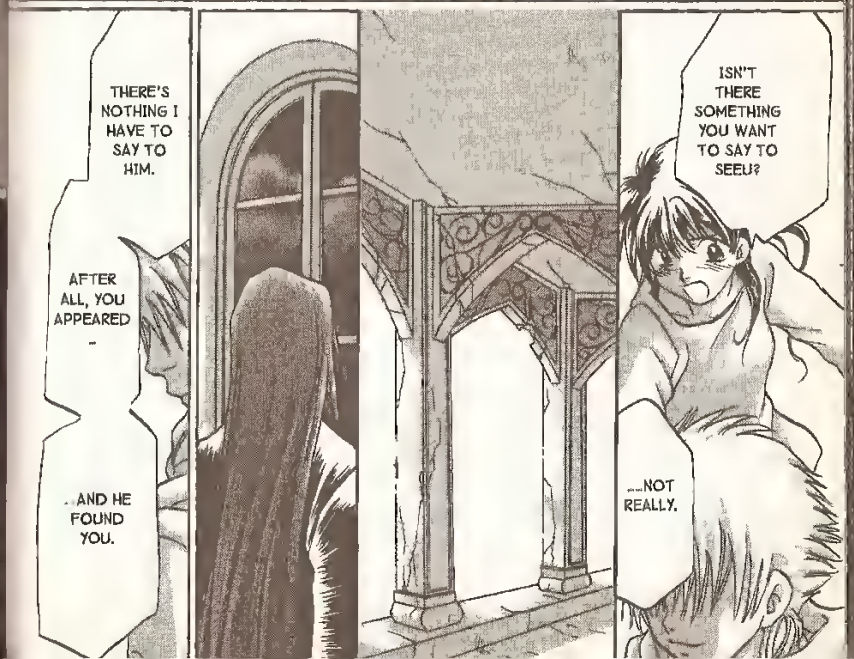
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP...
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
I THINK I MADE A MISTAKE HERE...
MY BAD.
OH, OH!
DARN IT!
EH...
FLOAT

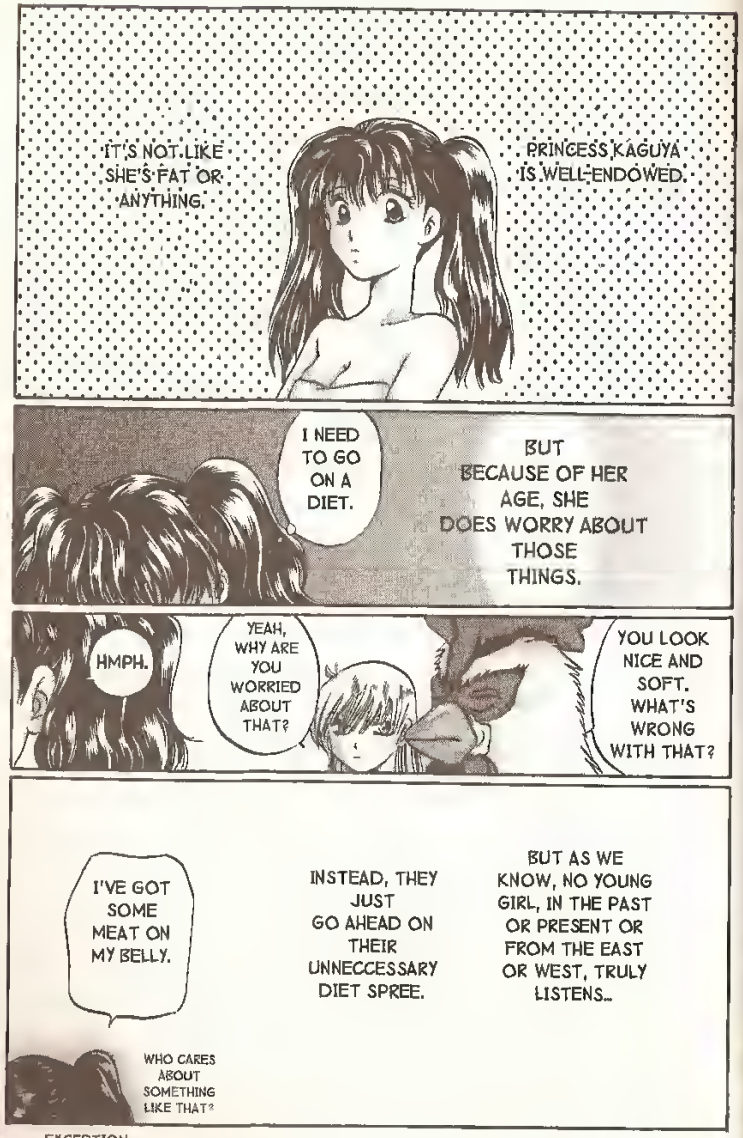

OR, AT LEAST, WE PLAN ON MAKING IT MOVE.
THE WORLD THAT WAS ONCE FROZEN WILL FINALLY MOVE AGAIN AFTER HUNDREDS OF YEARS.

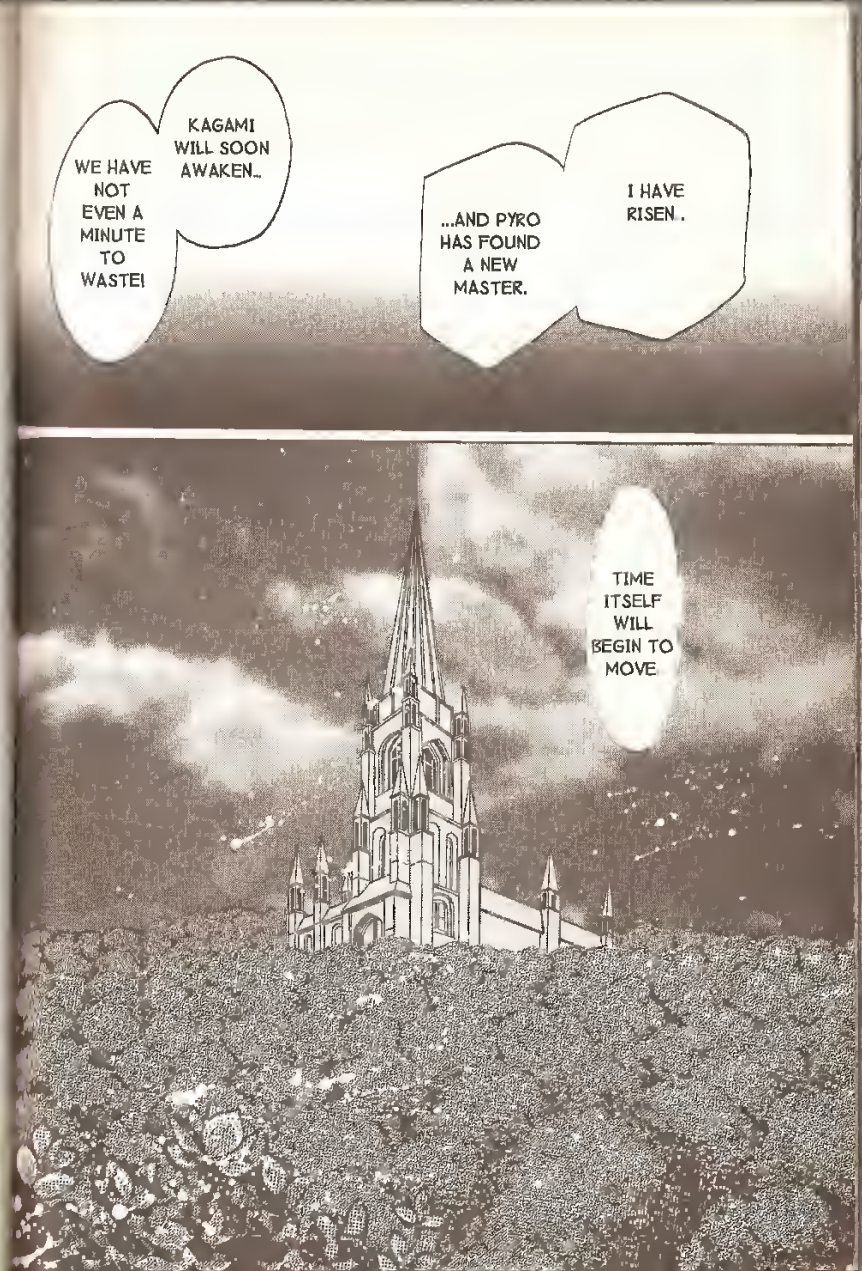
I WON'T ALLOW HIM TO BE THE ONLY EXCEPTION.
WE AND THE WORLD DO NOT WISH FOR THAT AT ALL.


YOU'RE FAR AWAY FROM THAT LAND WHERE YOU WERE RAISED, AND NOW YOU ARE HERE.
PRINCESS KAGUYA...
...YOU HAVE COME HERE FROM FAR AWAY..


HOLD ON A MINUTE THERE!!
PERHAPS I'LL JUST GO OUT FOR A LITTLE WALK.
MY, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL DAY IT IS..


THERE'S NOTHING I HAVE TO SAY TO HIM.
AFTER ALL, YOU APPEARED -
..AND HE FOUND YOU.
ISN'T THERE SOMETHING YOU WANT TO SAY TO SEEU?
...NOT REALLY.


IT'S NOT LIKE SHE'S FAT OR ANYTHING.
PRINCESS KAGUYA IS WELL-ENDOWED.
I NEED TO GO ON A DIET.
BUT BECAUSE OF HER AGE, SHE DOES WORRY ABOUT THOSE THINGS.
HMPH.
YEAH, WHY ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT THAT?
YOU LOOK NICE AND SOFT. WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT?
I'VE GOT SOME MEAT ON MY BELLY.
WHO CARES ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
INSTEAD, THEY JUST GO AHEAD ON THEIR UNNECCESSARY DIET SPREE.
BUT AS WE KNOW, NO YOUNG GIRL, IN THE PAST OR PRESENT OR FROM THE EAST OR WEST, TRULY LISTENS..
EXCEPTION.


WE HAVE NOT EVEN A MINUTE TO WASTE!
KAGAMI WILL SOON AWAKEN..
...AND PYRO HAS FOUND A NEW MASTER.
I HAVE RISEN.
TIME ITSELF WILL BEGIN TO MOVE

Planet Ladder 5 Coming in 2003

Will Kaguya ever be able to save the world and find her way home?

Read about her continuing adventures in Planet Ladder 5, coming in 2003.

What's your favorite thing about Kaguya and Planet Ladder?

Please send questions, comments, and fan art to:
Julie Taylor, Senior Editor
TOKYOPOP
5900 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 2000
Los Angeles, CA 90036
editor@TOKYOPOP.com

Look for questions and responses to be published in future volumes of Planet Ladder.

FU FU FU FU
BUT JUST RECENTLY, SHE WAS GIVEN THE CHANCE TO SUCCEED.
YES, THAT SORT OF HARSH LIFE MIGHT BE ONE OF THE LUCKIEST THINGS TO HAPPEN TO A GIRL HER AGE.
I BET I'M AT MY TARGET WEIGHT RIGHT NOW.
I'VE LOST WEIGHT.
I JUST KNOW THAT I LOST WEIGHT.
RIGOROUS CAMPING, AND HUMBLE FOOD.
BUT..
AND SO KAGUYA AND HER HURT MAIDEN'S PRIDE FURTHERS HER RESENTMENT FOR SEEU.
NOT ONLY THAT, I THINK..
I THINK I GAINED..
GAAAAHHH
IT'S BACK..
IT'S DEFINITELY BACK.